UNITED NATIONS

A

General Assembly

PROVISIONAL

A/S-17/PV.6
7 March 1990

ENGLISH

Seventeenth special session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SIXTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 22 February 1990, at 3 p.m.

President:	Mrs. CHACON (Vice-President)	(Costa Rica)
later:	Mr. ABULHASAN (Vice-President)	(Kuwait)
later:	Mr. GARBA (President)	(Nigeria)
later:	Mr. PAWLAK (Vice-President)	(Poland)

- General debate [8] (continued)

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In the absence of the President, Mrs. Chacon (Costa Rica), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 8 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. GYAW (Myanmar): I wish at the outset to express my delegation's satisfaction at seeing Ambassador Garba presiding over this special session of the General Assembly. We are pleased that he has found it possible to be present among us despite his responsibilities at home. We are confident that his wealth of experience and demonstrated diplomatic skills will once again stand us in good stead as they have done at the forty-fourth session and the sixteenth special session of the General Assembly.

Foremost among the social concerns of our world today is the ominous threat posed to mankind by narcotic drugs. It is universally recognized that the situation is becoming more and more grave and has developed into a problem that transcends national boundaries. In the past decade alone it has grown with such devastating consequences for individuals, families, societies and nations that unless we can meet the challenge and stem the tide now, the future of mankind will be bleak.

We are however encouraged to note that in recent years the international community has become fully alive to the menace posed by narcotic drugs. It has come to realize that the problem is multifaceted and, hence, eliminating it is the responsibility not only of countries where narcotic drugs are grown but also of the transit and consumer States. It is in this spirit of co-operation that my delegation welcomes this special session as a unique opportunity for the international community to provide the necessary political impetus and lay down an effective, workable and balanced global programme of action that would eventually

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

rid our world of the scourge of narcotic drugs and drug traffickers. We must, however, not lose sight of the fact that a political declaration and a global programme of action, expressing the political will of nations, will remain dead letters so long as resources commensurate with the task at hand are not forthcoming. We would therefore urge that such resources be made available by those who are in a position to do so.

The United Nations has been, and is, in the forefront of efforts to curb the rise in drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking. The important work carried out by the United Nations system has contributed in no small measure to ameliorating the situation in many countries. Despite these achievements much more remains to be done.

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

We are of course fully confident that the Secretary-General's continuing efforts to enhance the efficiency of the Organization's structure for drug abuse control will bear fruit and improve the performance of the whole United Nations system in this field. Here my delegation wishes to commend the United Nations Division on Narcotic Drugs, the secretariat of the International Narcotics Control Board and the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control for their positive contributions.

We believe that, in order to respond effectively to the challenge posed by the rising threat of drug abuse and drug trafficking, it would be necessary for the international community not only to strive to strengthen the United Nations role through additional mandates but also to tackle the problem simultaneously in all its dimensions. It would be necessary to intensify not only measures to curb the illicit production of and trafficking in drugs but also to step up measures to prevent the illicit demand for drugs. Let me repeat that the struggle against drugs is the collective responsibility of drug-producer countries, transit States and consumer countries. Supply-reduction programmes in the producer countries must be matched by vigorous and sustained interdiction measures in the transit States and by resolute and comprehensive demand-reduction programmes in consumer countries. As long as demand for illicit drugs remains significant and money is available, and as long as criminal gangs can continue to transport huge quantities of illicit drugs across international frontiers with near impunity, efforts to eradicate the cultivation of narcotic drugs in producer countries like Myanmar will be seriously undermined. We consider that, in order to close the gap in the existing international legal framework on drug abuse control, there is an urgent need to elaborate a United Nations convention on demand reduction. We are heartened to see a growing realization that illicit demand lies at the root of the drug problem, and we earnestly hope that the ministerial-level conference to be

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(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

convened in London in April will come up with credible answers to deal with this aspect of the problem in a comprehensive manner. Moreover, serious and effective measures must be taken to cut off all supplies of precursor chemical substances necessary for the manufacture of narcotic drugs. Likewise, similar measures must be taken to prevent the flow of weapons to drug traffickers.

We are equally heartened by the successful outcome of the recently held Cartagena summit meeting on drugs between the Presidents of the United States and the three Andean States of Bolivia, Colombia and Peru. It is a constructive step and an important start towards regional co-operation. We believe that such regional co-operation can effectively supplement national efforts, provided conditions peculiar to the region are met.

We live in a world of vast transformations. As a result of the warming trends between the two super-Powers and the unprecedented changes taking place from the Urals to the Andes, the current focus of world attention has shifted from such issues as ideology and the cold war to more practical and pressing matters, such as the fragility of the global environment, the mounting debt issue and the menace of narcotic drugs. We hope that this shift in the international community's emphasis is a harbinger of a new and more positive era for the world.

However, even as we welcome the positive changes taking place in the international political climate, we must stress that principles of non-interference in internal affairs and respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States must remain paramount. Never must the problem of illicit drug production and trafficking be used as a pretext for intervention in the domestic affairs of States in any shape or form.

The menace posed by narcotic drugs presents the international community with a complex challenge. This challenge can be met only if every State that constitutes

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

a link in the chain of the infamous drug trade from producers to consumers carries out its responsibilities with determination. We in Myanmar have been doing our full share by all means at our disposal, allocating a significant portion of our scarce resources to this task. We have been relentlessly waging a determined war against the menace of narcotic drugs as a matter of national responsibility since regaining independence. To combat this menace, we have laid down comprehensive programmes and are energetically implementing them. These programmes include the whole range of drug control activities: law enforcement, crop substitution, livestock breeding, medical treatment, rehabilitation, education and mass media information. An elaborate legal framework has also been set up, and in 1974 the Narcotic and Dangerous Drugs Law was enacted. While one part of this legislation is directed towards the elimination of the cultivation of opium poppy and marijuana within our territory, the second part is directed towards the prohibition of drug-related crimes, ranging from illicit trafficking to abuse of narcotic drugs, prescribing stiff penalties for such offences. Under the law, drug addicts are required to register with State institutions and receive medical treatment; it also provides for the destruction of narcotic crops and confiscation of equipment used in the production of drugs. This law was further amended and reinforced in 1983 and 1988.

The magnitude of the task that is being carried out in my country can be judged from the fact that not only are insurgent groups running the drug business well-armed and ruthless, but also that opium poppy is cultivated in remote border regions of the country in densely wooded and rugged terrain accessible only on foot or by helicopter. Taking advantage of the remoteness of these regions, insurgent groups in co-operation with international drug syndicates have been manufacturing heroin in mobile laboratories hidden in wooded valleys and have been arming

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

themselves with modern weapons bought with drug money from unscrupulous international drug runners. Notwithstanding these formidable obstacles, the Myanmar security forces in the 11 years from 1977 to 1988 carried out large-scale military operations in 12 phases, with mounting success. These operations resulted in the destruction of 15 refineries and the seizure of 7,216 kilos of opium, 538 kilos of morphine, 224 kilos of heroin, 2,033 gallons of liquid opium and large quantities of chemical compounds, including 257 gallons of acetic anhydride and paraphernalia. In the course of these operations, the security forces had 159 armed encounters with the insurgent drug traffickers, killing 176 of them and capturing nine alive.

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

They also seized 748 assorted arms, 2,364 explosive devices, 70,769 rounds of ammunition and 19 telecommunication sets. In parallel operations carried out by our police force 3,033 kilos of heroin and 151,734 kilos of marijuana valued at over $220 million were seized. At the same time, eradication of poppy fields were carried out by means of aerial spraying and by mechanical means relying on manpower. Over 200,000 acres of cultivated opium fields were effectively destroyed, preventing the production of 933 tons of opium worth approximately $810 million. In the latest action the Myanmar authorities on the 13th of this month destroyed heroin and other narcotic drugs worth more than $418 million in Yangon, in the presence of representatives of international organizations and diplomatic missions represented in our capital. The drugs destroyed included 209 kilos of heroin. During the first 12 phases of the narcotic suppression campaign alone, 109 members of our security forces lost their lives and a further 571 were wounded.

In combating narcotic drugs, we have benefited greatly from the co-operation extended to us by the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control. Agreements have been signed to carry out sector-wide measures, and we are confident that these co-operative efforts will be maintained and strengthened.

In order to achieve even greater success in the fight against narcotic drug abuse in the years ahead, in May 1989 the Myanmar Government initiated an integrated rural development programme of unprecedented nature and scope in the remote border areas with the aim of accelerating their economic and social development. The programme is gaining momentum and we are convinced that its successful implementation will greatly accelerate the eradication of opium cultivation, thereby contributing to global efforts to combat the scourge of drug abuse. Primarily our aim is to establish key villages where the infrastructure -

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

roads, power, water supply, housing and so forth - will be developed. In so doing, local people from the surrounding less-developed areas will voluntarily move to such key villages where living conditions would be appreciably better. In the initial period, certain basic needs of these villages, such as food, clothing and shelter, will be provided by the Government. In addition, land development and cultivation of cash crops will be introduced. At the same time, task forces will be established to combat drug trafficking and to co-ordinate activities with their counterparts in adjacent countries, whose co-operation is essential if our national efforts are to be fully successful. We are confident that such co-operation will be forthcoming in full measure. In this regard, I am pleased to inform members that we have initiated such an arrangement with Thailand.

With mass-media information and education, it is hoped that local opium cultivators will gradually come to understand the horrors of narcotic drugs and its related consequences and thereby give up opium cultivation voluntarily. Accordingly, priority has been accorded to rural development, law enforcement and crop substitution. In order to implement the programme, the Government is providing land, buildings, equipment, supplies and personnel at a cost of $150,000 per task force and $2.8 million per township over a period of three years. While these programmes are being carried out with our own resources, we would wholeheartedly welcome friendly assistance from nations and international organizations interested in these projects.

While we have made significant headway in our drugs suppression efforts, we are fully aware that much remains to be done. As in the past, we shall continue to shoulder our national responsibility and strive to overcome the drug menace.

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

The abuse and trafficking of narcotic drugs are beginning to rend the fabric of societies and nations. This special session attests to the seriousness with which the international community views the situation and its realization that urgent action must be taken to meet the challenge. The situation is indeed serious but not hopeless. The international community can, and must, co-operate to find a global and comprehensive solution to the problem. This much we owe to our youth and to succeeding generations.

Mr. KAWYAN (Afghanistan): The question before us is a vitally important one. Illicit production, supply, demand for, trafficking in and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances has reached such a vast scale that it is no longer possible for any individual State, small or big, to cope with it alone. Vast international co-operation is obviously called for if we are to free the present generation, and generations to come, from the scourge of drug abuse and the multiplicity of social and economic problems that go with it.

One of the primary areas that requires immediate and concerted attention is clearly the reduction and eventual elimination of drug abuse. Although much has to be done in this area by individual States, international co-operation is of vital importance. The Division on Narcotic Drugs, the International Narcotic Control Board and the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control must be strengthened to play their indispensable parts, both individually and in collaboration with other United Nations bodies. Similarly, international assistance, particularly through the United Nations system, is much needed for the effective implementation of national treatment and rehabilitation programmes.

If reduction and elimination of drug abuse require international co-operation, it is even more so in the case of controlling the illicit supply of and trafficking

(Mr. Kawyan, Afghanistan)

in such drugs. For such co-operation to be effective, it is necessary to make it free from any political consideration for the sake of the common good. Particular attention should also be paid to adopting effective measures to prevent putting arms at the disposal of mercenaries and other groups and individuals who make use of them for illicit drug cultivation, processing and trafficking. The question of saving millions of our youth and children from the scourge of drug abuse must receive priority over any political consideration that might be involved.

Drug supply reduction and interdiction entails, in the case of many countries, expenditures of scarce financial and economic resources which are urgently needed for developmental efforts. Therefore, fresh commitments for economic, financial and technical assistance to these countries are required to help them carry out national policies for crop substitution and elimination of supply. Tariff and non-tariff preferential treatment to provide access to international markets as an incentive for the adoption of commercial crops is a prerequisite to any success in supply reduction.

Most countries are also in need of techinical assistance, exchange of information and expertise on preventing drug trafficking from or through their countries. The 1988 United Nations Convention against Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances goes a long way towards suppressing drug trafficking at the international level. We believe that regional and subregional agreements and other forms of co-operation in effectively dealing with drug trafficking is likewise necessary.

(Mr. Kawyan, Afghanistan)

The Republic of Aghanistan has undertaken all legal and practical measures to curtail production and illicit trafficking of narcotic drugs in line with the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of 1987. The first article of the Law on Banning Drug Production and Abuse stipulates:

> "The cultivating, production, import, transportation, trade, trafficking, storage, spread and usage of narcotic drugs is totally prohibited in the Republic of Afghanistan. The perpetration of such acts are punishable by law ...".

On the basis of a decree issued by His Excellency President Najibullah in 1987, the war against drug trafficking was intensified. As a result, so far 28,088 kilograms of hashish, 10,325 kilograms of opium and 14,205 killograms of heroin and other drugs have been confiscated in the country. In 1989 alone, 716 kilograms of heroin, 1,590 kilograms of hashish and 28,940 Mandrax tablets were set on fire.

Due to favourable traditions of our people and the teachings and values of the sacred religion of Islam, fortunately drug abuse is regarded as an evil and deplorable act in Afghan society. However, drug addiction is not rare in Afghanistan, and attention must be paid to treatment and rehabilitation. So far, 3,000 people have been properly treated in the rehabilitation centre. However, the possibilities of the centre remain very limited, and it is in need of technical and financial assistance from United Nations bodies. Our efforts to educate the population, particularly youth and children, on the dangers of drug abuse, carried by the mass media with the co-operation of the Ministries of Education and Public Health, also require international support and encouragement.

The need for international assistance is particularly felt in the field of fighting illicit drug trafficking. Due to its geographic location, Afghanistan lies at the crossroads of *much drug trafficking. The frontier areas between*

(Mr. Kawyan, Afghanistan)

Afghanistan and Pakistan have also been nicknamed the Golden Crescent, because a significant amount of drugs, particularly heroin, sold on the streets of the United States, Canada and Europe originate in that area. Although our success in interdiction efforts have been significant by any standard, it is impossible to cope with the problem without concerted regional co-operation and international support.

What is more alarming, recent years have seen a manifold increase in both the area of cultivation and the volume of illicit trafficking. While in 1976 some 120 tons of heroin was produced, the figure for 1989 was 580 tons. In the same period, the area of hashish cultivation jumped from 500 to 1,400 hectares.

This sorry situation is the direct result of the larger tragedy that is the war and bloodshed still flaring in Afghanistan. The war has created an ideal situation for the leaders of the Seven Alliance, their close associates and some of their commanders to get deeply involved in illicit drug production, processing and trafficking. These so-called leaders now constitute important links in the chains of international drug networks operating in North America and Western Europe.

The international mass media have abundantly reported on the involvement of those so-called leaders in drug production and trafficking on a large scale. In fact on different occasions several of their associates have in their talks with the media justified drug operations as a means of financing their so-called jihad. Mawlawi Mohammadi, Defence Minister in the so-called interim Government, justified poppy seed cultivation as a tradition to the Daily Times. The BBC, quoting the paper, on 27 September 1989 reported that Mohammadi had stated that "Our farmers are poor. They should be able to carry on their livelihood. The cultivation of poppy seeds constitutes one of our traditional products."

(Mr. Kawyan, Afghanistan)

According to information collected by competent organs of the Republic of Afghanistan, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, who is at the head of the Islamic Party of Afghanistan, is far ahead of the others both in terms of volume traded and extensive connections with the international drug networks. He is running the largest single factory for drug processing located in Rabat, bordering Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran. His other laboratories are located in the Jaji, Samkani and Teri Mangal areas. Areas cultivated by Hekmatyar inside Afghanistan are mainly located in Nengarhar, Zabul and Kandahar provinces, all located in the frontier areas.

Another so-called leader, Yunus Khalis, so-called Minister of the Interior, controls the greater part of drug production in Nengarhar and Kandahar provinces. Rasul Sayyat, the so-called Prime Minister, and Rabani, the so-called Minister of Reconstruction, are also engaged in drug trafficking. Gailani, the so-called Chief Justice, is active in Goshta subdistrict, Nengarhar province, as well as in districts of Packtia province, while Mujadeddi, the so-called President, runs several laboratories as well as tracts of poppy fields.

While the greater part of the narcotics produced by these leaders are smuggled to Western Europe and North America, a portion is set aside for consumption by their rank and file to bolster militancy and increase their dependency on the extremist leaders. Indeed the spread of drug abuse in the ranks of the opposition has created a serious problem for Afghanistan today and tomorrow, requiring tremendous efforts for treatment and rehabilitation, which might prove beyond the means available to the country.

(Mr. Kawyan, Afghanistan)

As reported by the international mass media, the question of narcotic drug trafficking by the Afghan armed opposition has figured in the United States administration's effort to curb the illicit supply of drugs to the streets of American cities and towns. According to a Voice of America dispatch on 4 December 1989, United States Ambassador to Pakistan Mr. Oakley has raised the question of drug production and trafficking with Sebghatullah Mujadeddi, of the so-called interim Government. According to other reports, the United States has promised an amount of $2 million to a certain commander in the Helmand province of Afghanistan called Mullah Nasim in exchange for putting an end to poppy cultivation.

(Mr. Kawyan, Afghanistan)

However, we are convinced that, notwithstanding the good intentions behind such acts, they are not likely to serve their purpose. Spending millions of dollars in encouraging some local commanders to engage in good behaviour will not work in the absence of effective control. Such measures are fraught with the real danger that they will backfire.

International and regional co-operation, on the other hand, can facilitate exchanges of information, experience and expertise to ensure more effective interdiction and eradication. The Republic of Afghanistan stands ready to co-operate, to the largest extent possible, with all the countries of the region - Pakistan, Iran, the Soviet Union, India and others - as well as with the United States of America and the Western European countries in fighting the scourge of the illicit supply of and trafficking in narcotic drugs from the region. We shall make use of all the possibilities and information at our disposal in order to make fruitful co-operation in this field possible.

In a message addressed to Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, on the eve of this special session,
His Excellency Najibullah, President of the Republic of Afghanistan, stated:

> "The question of the illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances has become a source of grave concern to the international community. We in the Republic of Afghanistan fully share this concern. This is all the more true because, unfortunately, the frontier area between Afghanistan and Pakistan has been turned into a huge base for illicit narcotic drugs cultivation, processing and supply, with a very negative effect on the lives and well-being of hundreds of thousands of individuals, particularly the youth, both in the area and

(Mr. Kawyan, Afghanistan)

overseas. According to statistics released by the United States Drug Enforcement Agency, 90 per cent of the heroin confiscated in the United States and 70 per cent of that confiscated in Europe originated in this area.

"The Government of the Republic of Afghanistan has done everything to fight this scourge, with all the means at its disposal. Indeed, our record of success is significant. However, the problem has been compounded by the fact that the greater part of those dealing in the illicit cultivation, processing and trafficking of narcotic drugs consist of the leaders of armed extremist groups and greedy circles close to them. Their direct participation in the international illicit drug-dealing networks is the root cause of the tremendous increase in recent years of narcotic drugs in that area.

"The Government of the Republic of Afghanistan hopes that the organs of the United Nations concerned will adopt immediate comprehensive measures to cope with this serious problem. In this context, we propose that a special commission should be set up to study the scope of the problem with a view to recommending to the relevant United Nations bodies, as well as to the countries of the region, a joint comprehensive plan of action to eradicate the illicit supply of and trafficking in narcotic drugs from the area. To this end, the commission should also facilitate regional co-operation and call for the international technical and financial assistance that would be required. The Republic of Afghanistan stands ready to co-operate with all countries as well as with the proposed commission, providing it with all the information and documents at its disposal."

Mr. ABULHASAN (Kuwait) (interpretation from Arabic): This special session of the General Assembly is a reflection of, on the one hand, the gravity of the problem of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and, on the other, the growing international awareness of the scope of the problem and its harmful consequences at every level - human, material, economic, social, health - as well as its impact on relations between the countries that produce and those that consume illicit drugs. The special session is a reflection also of the international community's consensus on the necessity of adopting a common approach and exerting sincere, intensive efforts to break every link in the chain from production to distribution and to halt the illicit use of this poison.

Hence, the special session is of particular importance not only because it is a forum for the presentation of views and positions by the representatives of all the Governments of the world and for effective consultations to assist the decision-making bodies to achieve effective agreements and establish machinery for the struggle against this scourge, but also because it is an international arena for shedding light on the problem and increasing the awareness of its significance. In itself, that undoubtedly constitutes an effective, practical contribution to the eventual achievement of a solution.

In the light of all those considerations, the General Assembly, at the beginning of November last year, decided that a special session should be held, at a high political level, to consider possible ways of expanding international co-operation in the struggle against drugs and to draw up a global programme of action that would provide a framework for these activities. Those considerations led also to the adoption of three Conventions: the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances, and - the most

(Mr. Abulhasan, Kuwait)

recent one - the 1988 Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. The 1988 Convention has been signed by 88 States and ratified by four States thus far.

Five months ago the President of Colombia - and this special session is being held at his suggestion - set forth in his statement to the General Assembly the scope of the challenge that the international community faces, particularly the States directly concerned, such as Colombia. This is indeed a fight against criminal organizations in various parts of the world. It requires solidarity and support at the international and regional levels, if we wish to triumph over these merchants of death and architects of destruction, who do not shrink from terrorism and the shedding of innocent blood in order to continue their abominable activities.

The report on the session of the International Narcotic Control Board held in Vienna last month contains impressive figures that should sound the alarm in both developed and developing countries. The drug problem has indeed become a global problem, a problem threatening the security and life of a large number of States. The figures indicate that the drug trade in recent years has become a real industry, capitalized at billions of dollars. Furthermore, in a report to the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General points out that the monetary value of the drug trade is estimated by some sources to be $150 billion. That exceeds the monetary value of the oil trade and is second only to that of the arms trade.

(Mr. Abulhasan, Kuwait)

Those who have been following the evolution of this problem and efforts to combat it - such as the recent Cartagena summit meeting, which brought together the Presidents of four producer and consumer States - have discerned certain facts which we ought to take account of, since the Organization will no doubt be playing a crucial role in any co-ordinating activities among States.

Among those facts are those relating to the legal and juridical aspect of the problem. All States must adopt additional legislation to fight drugs, especially States that lack deterrent laws at present and those in which the problem is already acute or on the rise. Experience shows that harsher penalties usually serve as a deterrent, and that should be the central focus of States in the battle against the various aspects of the drug problem, including production and illicit trafficking.

In this connection, I am pleased to state that in 1983 Kuwait enacted an anti-drug law which contains a number of positive elements in the fight against drugs. We have enacted strict penalties of up to 15 years in gaol for traffickers in these poisons. In 1987 we also adopted a law to combat psychotropic substances, which is similar to the 1983 law. At present, the relevant authorities are conducting a study on making the penalties even stiffer and on the question of confiscating the profits from the drug trade.

Four months ago, Kuwait signed the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. Although we have some reservations and comments regarding certain aspects of the Convention, we are prepared to co-operate in establishing effective machinery to implement it, especially through bilateral agreements on the extradition of criminals and mutual legal assistance.

(Mr. Abulhasan, Kuwait)

For all the components of a coherent campaign to be in place, we must enhance international and regional co-operation to close the vise on producers and traffickers, thus preventing them from obtaining the arsenals of weapons, the chemicals, the equipment and other facilities they use to consolidate their empire of death. To close all the loopholes, information exchange ought also to be improved, and trans-boundary movement of bank deposits should be controlled.

The third aspect of the fight against drugs relates to prevention, chiefly counselling and campaigns of information and advice aimed chiefly at those with a special predisposition to drug abuse and at current users. In this regard, we must care for drug addicts and help reintegrate them into a normal active social life. Care and rehabilitation should be backed up by legal provisions and should focus especially on diminishing drug consumption and, thus, demand. We are pleased to note that the World Health Organization has announced that it has plans in that regard and that it will be submitting them to the Assembly at this session.

In line with the expectations of all those with an interest in the international struggle against drugs, there has of late been a special emphasis on the economic effects on those who cultivate narcotic crops, especially in certain States. There can be no doubt that this is a particularly important aspect that will influence all international efforts to combat drugs. Effective co-operation to attenuate those effects is imperative.

I wish finally to turn to the role of the United Nations. This Organization remains the driving force in international efforts to realize man's aspirations. We must spare no effort to adopt every effective and practical resolution possible to increase the effectiveness of United Nations organs. Numerous proposals and recommendations are already before us; these could be refined and, if implemented, could help us fight drugs effectively.

(Mr. Abulhasan, Kuwait)

This session should provide an opportunity to enhance the effectiveness of the International Narcotics Control Board, the Division on Narcotic Drugs and the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control. We hope a decade against drugs will also be proclaimed.

In conclusion, I wish to call on all institutions, governmental authorities, special agencies and all other bodies concerned to spare no effort to provide the impetus necessary to win victory over this terrible cancer upon the nations of the world and their prosperity.

Mr. MARDOVICH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): The current debate demonstrates, first, that mankind is afflicted today by a veritable epidemic of drug addition. It shows, too, the determination and readiness of all States to undertake joint concerted action to put an end to this social scourge.

Drug trafficking affects nearly all regions and, to one degree or another, all countries, all segments of the population and all age groups. World Health Organization data has demonstrated that drug abuse has become the primary cause of premature death, having overtaken cardio-vascular diseases and cancer.

(Mr. Mardovich, Byelorussian SSR)

As it assumes ever-greater dimensions the smuggling of drugs and psychotropic substances is creating a serious economic and socio-political problem. At a meeting of the Economic and Social Council's Commission on Narcotic Drugs last year it was pointed out that the illegal activities of international crime syndicates have become so widespread and are producing such enormous profits that the economies of various countries have been ruined and the functioning of legal institutions and the security of individual States have been jeopardized. A number of delegations have mentioned striking examples of that phenomenon in their statements here.

Decisions adopted at the forty-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly reflected the international community's increased understanding of the seriousness of the growing threat posed by the illegal drug business. Nearly a third of the resolutions adopted on reports of the Third Committee at that session dealt in some way with various aspects of the problem. The present special session should consolidate the decisions adopted earlier and indicate practical international measures to be taken in the common struggle against drug abuse.

Thanks to the adoption of timely measures, drug addiction in the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic is not widespread. In our drug centres there are some 700 drug users, approximately 400 of whom have been diagnosed as addicts, amounting to only 0.004 per cent to 0.007 per cent of the total population. Nevertheless, the problem does exist, and we are taking co-ordinated steps to overcome it. With a view to maintaining the health of the population as a whole, we have set up a special legal régime to deal with drugs in general. A list of drugs is maintained and their production is limited. There is a total ban on the production or use of specific narcotics for scientific or other purposes, and strict control is exercised over the distribution of other drugs. We also have a well-thought-out

(Mr. Mardovich, Byelorussian SSR)

system for the early identification of drug users. The illegal manufacture, acquisition, possession, transport, selling, stealing or promoting the use of narcotic substances, as well as the violation of the rules governing their manufacture, acquisition, possession, registration, prescriptions and transport for medical or other purposes, are all punishable under criminal law. Provision has also been made for confiscation of property and imprisonment for other types of drug-connected crimes.

In February 1989 the Byelorussian SSR signed the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, and preparations are now being made for its ratification. Laws are being drawn up in the Republic that will contain strong provisions in keeping with the Convention with a view to ensuring its full implementation after ratification. New laws will be promulgated to set strict penalties for those found guilty of distributing narcotics in Byelorussia. Our Republic supports other international legal documents pertinent to the struggle against drug addiction and strictly complies with their relevant provisions.

In that connection I should like to state that the Byelorussian SSR supports the concept of a United Nations international plan of action for the campaign against drug abuse and illegal trafficking in narcotics, particularly in so far as it deals with medical and social aspects of the rehabilitation of drug users and the work of medical institutions and health authorities in the early detection of beginning users of narcotics and psychotropic substances. In keeping with the Republic's social and economic development plans we have undertaken large-scale programmes designed to achieve substantial improvement in the medical services available to the population and to create more opportunities for leisure activities. In 1988 we adopted a health programme that includes prophylactic

(Mr. Mardovich, Byelorussian SSR)

measures and provides for the treatment of drug addiction. That programme calls for the creation of diagnostic centres and special laboratories and facilities for the long-term treatment of the sick, as well as a rehabilitation centre for addicts. In September 1989 a scientific conference was held at which the problems of the spread of addiction and methods to combat illegal drug trafficking were discussed.

The problem of drug addiction is complex. It includes demand, manufacture and production, trafficking and the social rehabilitation of addicts. Given that complex array of elements, it is impossible to single out one that should be given highest priority. We must combat all the phenomena as one single complicated evil. Success can be achieved only if timely and well-co-ordinated action is taken at the national, regional and global levels. It is also important that such action be taken on the basis of strict and unswerving compliance with the norms and principles of international law and in a way that will not merely lead to the creation of new problems for our countries by destabilizing their plans for social and economic development.*

We consider that the proposals for strengthening and enhancing the effectiveness of existing United Nations bodies concerned with the problem of narcotics are most timely. Their activities should be given the necessary priority, which, of course, presupposes a necessary reallocation of funds to deal with their particular problems. Recent positive changes in the disarmament sphere, the relaxation of regional conflicts and co-operation between countries, all of which reflect the new political thinking, have created favourable conditions for making those necessary adjustments, as well as for making new, larger-scale efforts

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* Mr. Abulhasan (Kuwait), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Mardovich, Byelorussian SSR)

to mobilize the international community in the struggle against this primary social ill of our time.

My delegation sincerely hopes that the special session will be productive and that it will adopt a realistic and well-balanced political declaration and global plan of action to consolidate and channel the efforts of States and the international community as a whole towards a greater and more effective struggle against the drug problem in all its forms and manifestations. We are prepared to do all in our power to promote its fruitful and successful conclusion.

Mr. AL-SHAKAR (Bahrain) (interpretation from Arabic): I am pleased to see, you, Sir, a dear brother, presiding over this meeting of the General Assembly. We wish you and the President of the special session, His Excellency Major-General Garba, success in achieving for the special session the outcome we so ardently desire.

(Mr. Al-Shakar, Bahrain)

Humanity is today facing the phenomenon of the spread of the illicit use of and traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances - a phenomenon that threatens society with disintegration, collapse, destruction. No country can any longer afford to ignore this problem or to stand idly by in the face of the international campaign aimed at ridding the world of the plague of drugs and psychotropic substances and the illegal trafficking in them.

Since the beginning of civilization drugs have been used for treatment and for medical purposes. However, their abuse has led to international concern unprecedented in history. In view of the rapidly spreading abuse of drugs and psychotropic substances, as well as the attendant financial and social damage from the illicit traffic in drugs, the concern is shared by the leaders and peoples of all States. In the last decade of the twentieth century the abuse of drugs represents a threat to this generation and future generations. Like all diseases that spread in various parts of the world over the centuries, this is a plague. The abuse of, and the illicit traffic in, drugs and psychotropic substances do a great deal of harm to the social fabric and result in the loss of countless innocent lives.

The great danger over the past few years has been the phenomenon of the use of drugs and psychotropic substances for purposes other than medical, and the fact that this practice is spreading among young people, who constitute the national wealth and the productive potential of any country. This has prompted both developed and developing States to devote more attention to the problem, with a view to eradicating it, so that society might be rid of the damage it does.

To achieve this end, national laws have been enacted, conferences held, and conventions adopted urging co-ordination of international efforts towards effective international measures against the abuse of drugs and psychotropic substances so as to eliminate this harmful social phenomenon.

(Mr. Al-Shakar, Bahrain)

The fight against drugs and psychotropic substances requires not only measures to relieve addicts of their dependency but also the arrest of traffickers. The aim must be the healthy life that can be enjoyed by all members of a society that is free from drugs.

Combating the phenomenon has become an international effort; it is no longer within the scope of any one country. Concerted efforts and a common approach are necessary in order to put a stop to the cultivation and production of drugs, punish the traffickers, and facilitate the treatment of addicts. In spite of all the international efforts at prevention, the huge financial gains from illegal trafficking in drugs seem to have become an insurmountable incentive to those involved in production and distribution. This phenomenon has widened in various parts of the world in the past few years. The illegal activities have achieved alarming dimensions in all countries; they are planned, organized and financed by the mafia and by drug cartels, which have international connections, particularly in financial circles. In some countries, drug barons and drug lords have been able to bribe and corrupt officials with huge amounts of money. They have spread violence, terror and terrorism to make possible the distribution of yet more drugs in various parts of the world, particularly in countries that are known as countries of refuge. They exert a negative influence on international co-operation and on the effective implementation of international treaties and conventions aimed at eliminating this phenomenon.

They also exercise political and economic power, with which they intimidate the legitimate authorities in a number of countries. The illegal traffic in drugs and psychotropic substances undertaken by these gangs has become an organized operation. It is a means of acquiring quick riches at the expense of society. It destroys the socio-economic systems, the social fabric and the political security of States.

(Mr. Al-Shakar, Bahrain)

It is a cause for optimism that there are so many international initiatives aimed at bolstering co-operation between producing countries and consuming countries, with a view to eliminating the many smuggling networks and undertaking effective co-operation in the implementation of the measures provided for in international conventions and treaties, such as those aimed at combating the use of, and the illicit traffic in, drugs and psychotropic substances, as well as enhancing the ability of nations to implement laws and promote bilateral and international co-operation to eliminate this phenomenon, which has reached incredible proportions.

The religious prohibition on drugs and psychotropic substances has limited, to a certain extent, the spread of the use of these substances among the youth in Bahrain society. The Islamic Shariah urges full mental and physical care of the human being. Drugs not only do great damage to the mental health of people but also harm society. Hence the Islamic Shariah has prohibited the use of all drugs and psychotropic substances, except for medical or other legitimate purposes, for both drugs and liquors affect the mental ability of the individual. The 1984 amendment of the Bahrain 1973 law on drugs and psychotropic substances has helped to limit this phenomenon in Bahrain by raising the punishment for illicit traffic in drugs to the death penalty or to life imprisonment and a huge fine.

Authorities in Bahrain have taken part in the international campaign to combat drugs and psychotropic substances through seminars and studies, under the slogan "Yes to life, no to drugs". Thus the citizens of Bahrain have become increasingly aware of the dangers of drugs. We have concentrated on youth, including students. As they are the wealth of the future and one of the main bases of socio-economic development, they must be fully informed about the dangers of this plague.

(Mr. Al-Shakar, Bahrain)

Bahrain believes in the significance of international co-operation to combat this phenomenon, and in view of our important geographical situation our authorities, in co-operation with other authorities of the countries in the area, have intensified their efforts to combat transit trade and interdicting the transfer of drugs from producer countries to consumer countries, since we believe that illicit traffic in drugs is an international crime against all humanity. This phenomenon requires of all countries immediate and effective measures to arrest drug traffickers and bring them to justice.

In this regard, Bahrain also ratified this February the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances - it was the fifth of the 90 States that have so far signed the Convention. Bahrain also acceded to the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, as amended by the 1972 Protocol, and the 1971 Convention of Psychotropic Substances.

Bahrain hopes that this special session, which demonstrates the unanimous will of the international community, will be able to adopt measures towards establishing a world free of drugs and psychotropic substances and their illegal traffic. This can come about only through adoption of an international strategy and firm measures on all levels - national, regional and international - to combat the use of drugs and psychotropic substances and their illegal traffic and to confine their use to legitimate purposes. This strategy should also include a plan of action that would determine the ways to combat cultivation of drugs and their traffic, put an end to international gangs and mafia dealing in drugs and benefiting from them, and treat addicts. The strategy and plan of action should become the international charter and code of conduct to which all countries would commit themselves and in which would be defined all the duties and responsibilities in such a way as effectively to control and monitor the drugs trade.

(Mr. Al-Shakar, Bahrain)

Bahrain believes it important for the General Assembly to consider at this special session the establishment of effective international machinery under the auspices of the United Nations to co-ordinate all international operations in the struggle against drugs and implement the measures to be adopted and the international instruments already in force, thereby reflecting the hopes and aspirations of all peoples to see an end to this plague.

Finally, we are hopeful that mankind will achieve a speedy end to this modern-day enslavement to drugs.

Dame Ann HERCUS (New Zealand): The increasing drugs problem in all its manifestations is an international problem. As my Minister, the Right Honourable Mike Moore said earlier this week,

> "The drug menace is multinational, with awesome economic power. The response must be multinational. New Zealand's influence is modest, our resources few, but we will join any multinational initiative that will help destroy this evil."

In New Zealand, and in the South Pacific generally, the scale of the problem is mercifully minor in world terms. But as part of an interdependent world, we have no grounds for complacency. No country, however isolated, has been unaffected by the growing drug crisis.

New Zealand welcomes the efforts of some of those most closely involved in the fight against drugs to co-ordinate a firm and comprehensive approach. We have already seen evidence of this international commitment at the recent Cartagena summit meeting. It clearly demonstrates the determination, at the highest levels of the Governments of Colombia, Bolivia, Peru and the United States, to take action. New Zealand, too, supports increased international co-operation and the

(Dame Ann Hercus, New Zealand)

fullest possible use of United Nations resources in intensifying the fight against drug abuse and illicit trafficking.

The South Pacific is characterized by its many countries and tiny populations. This has provided a measure of protection against drug traffickers. New Zealand has not been viewed as a major market by international standards. We have a relatively small population of narcotics users. But New Zealand does have its problems, and they are worsening in a trend evident elsewhere in the world. Cannabis and LSD seizures increased significantly last year. LSD imported through the mail system and local production of cannabis, morphine and heroin continue to be of concern. While geographic isolation affords some immunity, the same facts of geography mean also that New Zealand and other points in the region are used for the transit of narcotic drugs between producers and consumers. We sense the same violation, although on a far smaller scale, felt by those countries which find themselves drawn into the thick of the drug wars simply because of their position on the globe.

The human and social costs of drug abuse, whatever the scale, are too large and too painful for any society to tolerate. The drugs problem must be addressed at all levels - national, regional and international. New Zealand has national prevention and rehabilitation programmes. We also contribute to combating drug abuse beyond our borders. Most recently, New Zealand was involved in conducting seminars for Commonwealth countries in the South Pacific region on drug enforcement measures. We work co-operatively with many South-East Asian countries to combat drug trafficking. We have participated actively in regional Heads of National Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA) meetings for Asia and the Pacific.

(Dame Ann Hercus, New Zealand)

But, above all, it is at the international level that effective responses to the drug menace must be formulated. As the Secretary-General indicated in his opening remarks, the United Nations has played and will continue to play a crucial role. Within its system, in the various commissions and boards, is a considerable weight of experience on which to draw. We need to be sure those drug control organs have adequate resources to carry out their mandates with maximum efficiency and effectiveness.

New Zealand especially welcomed the conclusion in 1988 of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. International support for this Convention and other existing legal instruments is a key element in the fight against drugs, and New Zealand hopes to ratify the 1988 Convention shortly.

(Dame Ann Hercus, New Zealand)

The drug problem accelerates, to the point where the political process of some countries is virtually paralysed. The lives of too many are at stake. We must adopt a forward-looking, evolutionary approach to meet the crisis before us, a comprehensive strategy that addresses all aspects of the drugs problem. Supply and demand for drugs are part of the same equation. Success on one front cannot be won without gains on the other. Integrated rural development programmes are an important element of anti-drug strategy. We regard the opening-up of agricultural trade markets as one practical means of encouraging peasant farmers to grow legitimate crops.

Effective measures must also be implemented to reduce the demand for narcotic drugs. A constant or growing demand coupled with supply will simply increase the profits of the drug traffickers. We welcome the attention now being directed to the spoils of the drug trade, to drug money and financial flows. That strikes at the heart of what motivates the drug merchants. As well, national strategies will need to ensure the humanitarian treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers. The United Nations system is best placed to draw the different elements together to achieve an effective, multilateral strategy. The Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control, adopted in 1987, represents a valuable blueprint.

In conclusion, New Zealand fully supports the goals and objectives of this special session. A successful session, and the adoption of a programme of action, will send a message to all who benefit from the corruption of drugs that the initiative is no longer theirs. In the campaign against drugs, New Zealand foresees an enhanced role for international co-operation through the United Nations. The international community needs to act in concert and with determination. New Zealand is committed to making its contribution, both

(Dame Ann Hercus, New Zealand)

regionally and globally. We each suffer while the scourge of drugs afflicts the people of the world. Only together can we work towards the goal of a world free of drugs.

Mr. KARIM (Bangladesh): The problem of drugs now transcends all boundaries. It is afflicting the world like a cancer, threatening to push mankind into self-destruction. It is eating away the vitalities of our societies. Its debilitating effect is being felt in every section of our society. Drugs have now become a global problem threatening our social and political fabrics. Illicit use of and traffic in drugs is a social plague afflicting both developed and developing countries. No nation is immune from it. A problem of such serious universal dimensions requires a co-ordinated international response to combat it.

We have assembled here today to discuss ways and means for the effective strengthening of international co-operation against illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

The dramatic increase in the illicit traffic of narcotic drugs is posing a grave and persistent threat to the stability of all nations. No State can deal with this scourge single-handedly. International, regional and bilateral co-operation amongst countries is required to combat it. This special session will provide much needed impetus and direction in this respect. All the nations, regardless of their political, social and economic differences, must decisively act against the drug menace at every level.

The Government of Colombia and President Barco deserve praise for their courageous and determined efforts to fight the durg cartels. We welcome the agreements reached at the Cartagena summit meeting on 15 February. The Presidents of the United States, Colombia, Peru and Bolivia are to be commended for their firm determination to intensify the fight against drugs in the region.

(Mr. Karim, Bangladesh)

The United Nations has always attached high priority to the problems of drug abuse and traffic and plays a central role in combating them. The United Nations and its specialized agencies deserve our appreciation for committed actions in the area. We should like to commend the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, for his commitment to international drug control. The milestone in this regard are the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control adopted by the International Conference in Vienna in 1987, and the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. The special session could take practical action and measures to cover areas where the existing international co-operation mechanism is deficient as well as areas where new measures and methods will be required to meet new dimensions of the problem.

The special session has the opportunity to strengthen the United Nations system by agreeing on new mandates besides reaffirming existing ones in the fields of drug abuse and traffic control. The global programme of action to be adopted by the special session should have concrete, comprehensive and long-term objectives. It should be based on a strategy that simultaneously addresses all aspects of the drug problem.

The United Nations should act as a clearing-house of information and as a catalyst for actions by all countries within the framework of the global programme of action. Such a course of action should support the strengthening of national institutions and agencies involved in enforcement of anti-drug laws and treatment and rehabilitation of substance abusers and in preventive education programmes. Simultaneously steps should be taken to increase the effectiveness of the United Nations agencies involved in anti-drug activities. In this regard, we support fully the idea of a United Nations decade against drug abuse as envisaged in General Assembly resolution 44/141.

(Mr. Karim, Bangladesh)

The world ministerial summit to reduce demand for drugs and to combat the cocaine threat, to be held in London this April, would be relevant to our endeavour to combat the drug problem. We welcome this initiative undertaken by the Government of the United Kingdom. We expect the London conference to supplement the global programme of action with specific suggestions on demand reduction.

In the past, the drug problem has been a relatively insignificant factor in Bangladesh. As a signatory to the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, Bangladesh was committed to do away with the cultivation and consumption of a small amount of cannabis produced under strict Government supervision. We have fulfilled our commitment. We do not produce any opium or its derivatives, or any psychotropic substances.

However, in recent years drug abuse has surfaced quite alarmingly. Our proximity to the Golden Triangle, the Golden Crescent and the Golden Wedge has resulted in the use of our territory for in-transit traffic of drugs. The drug-abuse problem is a fall-out of such in-transit traffic. The international demonstration effect has compounded the problem. The drug abuse problem is gradually affecting our youth and children, and we can therefore no longer remain indifferent to it.

Our Government has launched an intense campaign to combat the menace of drugs on a wide variety of fronts covering institutional, legislative and socio-economic aspects.

(Mr. Karim, Bangladesh)

On the broad policy front, two obvious but distinct approaches are being pursued: first, to reduce the supply of illicit drugs through strong enforcement measures; secondly, to curtail demand, inter alia, through preventive education programmes, plans to augment overall development of youth, employment generation and the provision of recreational facilities. The mass media has been activated to heighten national awareness, to inform and educate the people and to maintain constant vigilance. These actions have been supplemented through seminars and symposia throughout the country. Administratively, a series of institutitional measures have been taken at the personal initiative of President Hussain Muhammad Ershad.

Despite severe resource constraints and the urgent need for allocation of resources to development programmes, the Government of Bangladesh has set up a new enforcement organization called the Department of Narcotics Control, directly under the President's secretariat. In keeping with Bangladesh's commitment towards the various anti-drug conventions, including the 1988 Convention against Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, we have been taking steps to strengthen the legal base for stronger enforcement. A new law has been enacted by the Parliament this year which has replaced laws introduced earlier by the colonial authorities primarily to control the production and sale of narcotics as a source of revenue. Bangladesh attaches top priority to the subject of narcotics control as well as to the treatment and rehabilitation of drug and substance abusers. Our Government has created a new high-powered Narcotics Control Board to direct anti-drug efforts in Bangladesh and also to forge greater co-ordination amongst the various agencies involved in the fight against drugs. The importance of this Board is evident from the fact that the First Lady of Bangladesh, Begum Raushan Ershad,

(Mr. Karim, Bangladesh)

herself, is the chairperson of the Board. This also attests to the personal commitment of our First Lady to the anti-drug war and her pioneering role in this area. The ministers in charge of all relevant ministries are members of this Board to facilitate policy formulation and implementation.

The new anti-drug law in Bangladesh has totally prohibited the cultivation, production, processing, storage, sale, consumption, trade and transportation of all narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances as well as their ingredients, except for purely medical or scientific purposes under the strictest licensing system. Prescription of narcotic drugs for medical reasons has also been regulated by this law.

This law has provided for stiff sentences for drug-related offences, including death and life imprisonment. It has also laid down minimum sentences for various offences so that a convicted offender has no opportunity to get away with a lenient or token sentence.

In order to make trafficking non-profitable, our law has made provisions for seizure and confiscation of assets of convicted traffickers. The law has also empowered investigators to examine bank accounts and tax files of suspects in drug trafficking cases, with prior permission from appropriate courts of law.

We are thus making sincere efforts, but they will bear fruit only if we can succeed in improving the standard of living of our people. We wholeheartedly and fully endorse the statement of the Secretary-General of the United Nations when he said:

"... there is now a real opportunity for more resources to be channelled into the war against poverty, a war fought in order to win sustainable development in its true sense of a better livelihood for millions of deprived people all

(Mr. Karim, Bangladesh)

over the world. Unless we make progress in that front, we shall not win the war against drugs." (A/S-17/PV.1, p. 16)

We are making sustained efforts to co-ordinate our national policy in conformity with those of the international community. We play an active role in initiating, supporting and advancing international co-operation efforts in all relevant forums, including the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC).

SAARC is already seized of the issue of the anti-drug war. A SAARC Technical Committee has been set up to come up with appropriate programmes of action. The year 1989 was observed as the SAARC year for combating drug abuse and drug trafficking. To forge greater regional co-operation to fight the drug menace a SAARC convention is being finalized. Bangladesh has actively participated in the recently concluded meeting of experts in Colombo to finalize the draft convention. This proposed convention will provide a framework for mutually supportive anti-drug efforts in the SAARC member countries.

Let us squarely and bravely confront the problems of drugs. We cannot afford to lose this war. We have to triumph in order to save human civilization. I am confident that by our united and collective actions, we shall succeed not only in loosening the strangulating grip of the drug epidemic in the short term, but also in totally obliterating this scourge from the face of the earth in the not-too-distant future.

Mr. DUMEVI (Ghana): The convening of the seventeenth special session to consider the question of international co-operation against illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances represents yet another effort by the international community in dealing with the awesome drug problem in all its dimensions.

(Mr. Dumevi, Ghana)

The scourge of drugs and the devastation it is causing to socio-economic and cultural development have left no region of the world or its peoples untouched. In regions with huge illicit trafficking, we have witnessed in recent months an upsurge in drug-related violence on a scale that threatens to paralyse political institutions and the already fragile economies of countries, while endangering the lives of scores of people.

National and regional efforts entailing huge sacrifices and aimed at combating the evils of the drug cartels have, so far, proved unsuccessful. The Ghana delegation, therefore, has no illusions about the enormity of the task ahead. Nor do we, for a moment, believe that given the multi-faceted nature of the problem, the drug phenomenon will be wiped out overnight. The anti-drug campaign, in our opinion, should be viewed as a long-drawn-out war demanding the elaboration of appropriate measures at national, regional and international levels for containing the new dimensions of the problem.

We welcome, in this connection, the conclusions of the drug summit held in Cartagena in Colombia last Thursday, 15 February. The adoption by the four Heads of State of a common strategy aimed at strengthening the comprehensive, intensified anti-narcotic programme that will deal with problems of demand reduction, consumption and supply is, in our view, a step in the right direction. The Cartagena summit meeting represents a constructive regional initiative which should provide impetus for other multilateral efforts aimed at tackling the drug menace. It is, however, the hope of the Ghana delegation that the experience gained at that meeting will serve as a useful formula for addressing the drug supply problems in other areas also identified as the major sources of heroin, whose production levels have been rising sharply.

(Mr. Dumevi, Ghana)

To have the desired impact, national and regional initiatives must be complemented by co-ordinated international action. General Assembly decision 44/410 of 14 November 1989, which mandated the holding of this special session, has spelt out in clear terms the importance of a continuing and an enhanced role for the United Nations in the fight against illicit drugs and psychotropic substances. The Ghana delegation supports this approach. The United Nations has, over decades, been involved in the anti-narcotic war and has evolved over the years a legal framework for international co-operation which can be strengthened in the war against drug abuse. Important accomplishments, over the years, in the implementation, for example, of the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, as amended by the 1972 Protocol, and the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances, together with the 1988 Convention, provide, in our view, useful guidelines in international drug control. Furthermore, the courses of action recommended at the national, regional and international levels contained in the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control, adopted by 138 States at the 1987 conference, provide a further valuable framework for international action which, if faithfully implemented, should help in the effective combating of the drug problem.

(Mr. Dumevi, Ghana)

This special session should in our view therefore examine the existing framework and propose appropriate structural changes that may be necessary to increase the scope and effectiveness of the United Nations in terms of General Assembly resolution 44/410. It is also our view that for the United Nations mandate to be effectively, applied global collaboration in the implementation of the various courses of action is necessary. This not only implies ratification of the relevant Conventions dealing with drug abuse but also requires that States should, as far as possible, refrain from entering reservations on those Conventions, since such reservations tend to weaken the force of what could otherwise be effective international instruments against drug abuse.

Much as the Ghana delegation would like to avoid getting involved in the ongoing debate about which aspect of the drug problem should receive priority consideration - namely, supply or demand - we cannot help but state that the suppression of demand is pivotal to the success of any international effort at the elimination of the scourge of narcotic drugs. The simple economic theory that a commodity that is not wanted on the market disappears by itself seems relevant in this case. Indeed the dramatic increase in drug abuse is the direct result of the phenomenal growth in the demand for drugs. We therefore believe that States, particularly those with demand-suppressing problems, should exert greater efforts in combating the problems of demand. We support in this connection national programmes aimed at promoting preventive education and public awareness targeted particularly at young people, programmes for rehabilitation and stringent laws directed at drug-related crimes. But since the major drug-demand countries have also been identified as the sources of the chemical precursors which are used in the manufacture of illicit drugs, programmes for the suppression of demand should in our view also include the establishment of an effective monitoring mechanism

(Mr. Dumevi, Ghana)

that could prevent the diversion to coca producing factories of exports of chemicals intended for legitimate use.

It is also our view that the anti-drug war, as far as sources of supply are concerned, will not be won if its only mission is the destruction of coca or opium farms. A realistic international programme that combines anti-drug efforts with a comprehensive rural development policy aimed at providing alternative ways of living for the hundreds of thousands in populations who depend on coca and opium for a living should, in our view, be among the primary objectives of this special session. Any measure short of this will be doomed to failure since the peasant populations affected will view it as a threat to their very existence at a time of extreme economic hardship. The displaced peasants may even turn to being collaborators with the traffickers, defeating the objective of the anti-drug effort.

Coming from a subregion that is fast gaining the negative distinction of being an international transit point due to its geographic location, the Ghana delegation cannot help but draw attention to the plight of those developing countries now serving as transit points for drug traffickers. Ghana is one of the countries whose ports have increasingly been used by the drug traffickers of the world. Although seizures have been made in relatively small quantities, Ghana has intensified its national anti-drug activities to deal, inter alia, with the disturbing incidence of international heroin traffickers who slip undetected through Ghana's ports only to be tracked and arrested at other international ports. These include national anti-drug measures being pursued under the auspices of Ghana's Narcotic Control Board, which has been charged, inter alia, with making recommendations to the Government regarding the provision of funds to meet the needs of the various anti-drug activities and job opportunities for treated and rehabilitated drug addicts. Appropriate national measures are also in force

(Mr. Dumevi, Ghana)

consistent with the proivisions of the relevant United Nations Conventions relating to illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. Furthermore, Ghanaian law enforcement agents have also mounted a comprehensive programme for clamping down on drug traffickers, consistent with Government policies for fighting the drug problem on all fronts.

It is, however, a matter of common knowledge that all transit points of developing countries are chosen by traffickers because of lapses at those ports, lapses not unrelated to their depressed economies, but more importantly because they lack the sophisticated equipment for the effective detection and control of the items of trade. As a countermeasure to deal with the problem, the Government of Ghana, jointly with the sisterly West African States of Nigeria, Togo and Benin, has instituted a programme of co-operation between law enforcement, customs and immigration officials. A quadri-tripartite treaty is also being negotiated which is aimed at, inter alia, preventing the exportation and transit of drugs though each other's territories.

For such regional co-operation to be viable, however, multilateral assistance is required in the form of the provision of appropriate devices to detect international couriers who slip through the ports. Assistance is also required in the area of the training of customs and law enforcement officers and in the provision of appropriate laboratory facilities that can serve the needs of the subregion. It is urged that this special session give appropriate attention to the needs of developing countries whose ports are becoming transit points for the illicit traffic in drugs and psychotropic substances.

We are aware of the intense consultations that are in progress to find common grounds that can be included in the Global Programme of Action. Even at the risk of prejudging the outcome of those negotiations, let me express the hope of the

(Mr. Dumevi, Ghana)

Ghana delegation that the documents adopted at the end of our deliberations will, among other things, underscore commitments to expand the scope and effectiveness of international co-operation against illicit drugs. The Ghana delegation will also support a proclamation of a decade to focus international attention on the abuse of drugs.

In conclusion, I would emphasize Ghana's position that drug abuse is a major global problem that must be eliminated before it destroys our societies. This seventeenth special session testifies to the universal commitment to concerted action to deal with the problem. It is indeed a problem the international dimensions of which - as evidenced by the world-wide incidence of crime, killings and other drug-related violence - demands that vigorous and resolute action be taken within the framework of multilateral co-operation to deal with it on all fronts.

It is true that primary responsibility lies with individual States. But it is also an incontrovertible fact that success in combating the problem will depend upon support from the international community, particularly those who possess requisite technologies for the tracking down of the drug traffickers. We look forward to the adoption of a programme of action that will send strong signals to the international drug cartels that the international community is ready to tackle the challenge and that it will not relax until the battle is won. As part of our commitment to and support of the global war against drug abuse, Ghana will continue to offer its active co-operation.

Mr. AL-SHAALI (United Arab Emirates) (interpretation from Arabic): The convening of this special session of the General Assembly to deal with the drug problem is a reflection of the importance the international community attaches to the problem. It also highlights the suffering endured by peoples and States confronted by this rampant threat - an even greater threat to human civilization than that posed by war and mass destruction. Indeed, drug abuse tears at the very fabric of human society. It makes no distinction between rich and poor.

It is true that the drug problem is not new. But it is now in a new stage, for it has taken on really dangerous proportions. The use of drugs is spreading progressively; they are found in all countries of the world. The drug problem concerns all of us, without exception. That is why we must pool all our efforts in this war, which, as the President of the General Assembly has said, must be waged and must be won.

We believe that we have now passed the stage of casting blame on one or another party. We must shoulder our collective responsibility. We cannot confine ourselves to analysing the problem. Indeed, we are already aware of its causes and its effects. We must develop a global programme to attack all aspects of the problem and provide for the appropriate remedies. The exchange of information between States is one essential element in such a programme.

Some of the causes of the cultivation and production of narcotic substances are linked to consumption; others are not. Trafficking in and distribution of narcotic drugs are linked to both production and consumption. Hence, we cannot address one aspect of the problem in isolation from the other. The phenomenon of production has always been related to economic factors. Consumption is related to social problems. Trafficking is linked to both sets of factors.

(Mr. Al-Shaali, United Arab Emirates)

The determination shown by Colombia in struggling against this scourge is an example that we should all strive to follow. Its heroic sacrifices must not be in vain. Other States that cultivate or produce drugs should exert the same kinds of efforts as Colombia has exerted. The consumer countries must make even greater efforts, especially by enacting legislation and other strict measures to increase the cost of trading in drugs.

We are gratified at the outcome of the Cartagena summit. The very holding of that summit was a reflection of the desire of the States concerned to co-operate in fighting against this scourge.

We in the United Arab Emirates attach the greatest importance to the phenomenon of trafficking in narcotic drugs - a phenomenon which has started to affect us only recently. We are giving it the most serious attention, because our geographical position lends itself to such trafficking. Thus, our Government has rallied all the governmental agencies in the fight against drugs at all levels. We have also signed the 1961 Convention on Narcotic Drugs, as amended by the 1972 Protocol; the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances; and the 1988 Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. We have established anti-drug bodies. Our Law No. 6, which was adopted in 1986, embodies our anti-drug legislation. On the same lines, we are co-operating with neighbouring States in exchanging information with a view to monitoring trafficking activities.

However, we do not believe that individual or regional efforts alone can be successful in fighting this pernicious trade. As the Secretary-General said in his opening remarks to the special session, the most effective and surest way to succeed in our efforts in this respect is to co-ordinate international co-operation

(Mr. Al-Shaali, United Arab Emirates)

through the United Nations. To that end, we support the proposal by Mrs. Thatcher, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, for the holding next April of an international ministerial conference, in co-operation with the United Nations.

This is the time for action. The recommendations and programme of action drawn up by the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee provide a point of departure for the development of an international global strategy for the struggle against narcotic drugs. We hope that this special session will lay the foundations for such an international strategy.

Mr. RANA (Nepal): I should like to extend to Mr. Garba my delegation's warm felicitations on his unanimous election as President of this special session of the General Assembly and to express our full confidence in his ability to guide our deliberations to a successful conclusion.

The menace of drug trafficking and abuse has emerged today as a major problem confronting humanity. Year after year, an increasing number of persons, even in countries once immune, are falling victim to this scourge. The consequences, especially for youth - including the effects on their creativity - have already been disastrous.

(Mr. Rana, Nepal)

As the Secretary-General noted in his annual report to the General Assembly, illicit use and traffic of drugs has become a social plague afflicting both developed and developing countries. It is a chastening observation that humanity is so deeply mired in the commerce of degradation and death.

This illicit trade in human misery, valued at around $500 billion a year, sustains increasing criminal activity and encourages corruption and violence within or across national frontiers. Drug abuse is no longer a mere health or even social problem; it is threatening the political and economic stability of nations.

As the criminal organizations running this trade have no respect for international frontiers, no State is in a position to counter the problem alone. The situation is critical, but it is not yet hopeless.

As President Barco of Colombia has said repeatedly, the only law drug traffickers do not break is the law of supply and demand. So long as there is widespread demand for illicit drugs and psychotropic substances, and the money to pay for them, the traffickers will find a way to meet that demand. The war against drugs will be won or lost on the basis of the ability of the international community to strike a balance between restricting the supply of narcotic drugs and reducing the demand for them. Nepal therefore welcomes the initiative taken by the United Kingdom to organize an international conference on demand reduction, to be held in April in London, and hopes the conference will provide an opportunity to examine in depth the possibility of concluding an international instrument on the reduction of the demand for illicit drugs.

The global menace of drugs calls for a global response, and the United Nations offers the best forum for that urgent task. An effective international response will greatly depend on close co-ordination and on reliable funding of a multidisciplinary programme of action. Such a problem must include more

(Mr. Rana, Nepal)

comprehensive co-operation among national law enforcement agencies in interdiction and narcotics intelligence. The programme must also promote incentives for the cultivation of substitute crops within the framework of comprehensive rural development programmes. Assurances of a steady market for the substitute products constitute an essential element in the reduction of the illicit production of raw materials.

Nor can a global programme overlook the social and humanitarian aspects of the problem. I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to express my delegation's appreciation to Ambassador Peter Hohenfellner, Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee of the special session, and to the other members of the Bureau, for their contributions to the preparation of the draft declaration, which reflects our consensus and which recommends concrete measures.

Over the past four decades, the United Nations has achieved important results in the fight at the international level against drug abuse and trafficking. The first United Nations International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, held in 1987, adopted a Declaration expressing the collective determination of the international community to co-operate in fighting this scourge. The Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control has provided a framework for Governments in developing national anti-drug strategies. The Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, the 1972 Protocol Amending the Single Convention, and the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, together with the 1988 Convention, constitute a comprehensive system of international drug control and a framework for international co-operation against illicit drug trafficking.

(Mr. Rana, Nepal)

We commend the activities of the Organization's agencies and drug control units, and hope that this special session will thoroughly examine the activities of the various agencies and units with a view to ensuring even greater coherence of action in all drug-related activities. The lack of financial and human resources has been the main impediment to fulfilling the mandates of the drug control units within the United Nations. The special session has to ensure that the resources allocated to those units are commensurate with the heavy demands on them.

Although the problem of drugs is not acute in Nepal, we are aware of the threat it could pose to our society. We have accordingly adopted preventive legal and administrative measures in the fight against drug trafficking and abuse. Within our resource constraints, we have been placing increasing emphasis on treatment, rehabilitation and the reintegration of drug offenders and abusers. Increasing attention is being paid also to education and public information campaigns to generate awareness among the masses. Non-governmental organizations are encouraged to become involved in the campaigns.*

In recognition of the fact that this problem transcends the boundaries of nations, the seven member countries of the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) have included co-operation to combat drug trafficking and drug abuse in their integrated programme of action for regional co-operation. To generate pulic awareness at the regional level, 1989 was observed as the SAARC Year against Drug Abuse, and 8 December, the day the Association was launched, has been designated the SAARC Day against Drug Abuse.

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* The President returned to the Chair.

(Mr. Rana, Nepal)

The drafting of a regional convention on drug control is nearing completion. We hope the regional convention will be an additional measure in the effort to rid South Asia of the evils of drug abuse and trafficking.

The Cartagena summit has established a useful framework for regional co-operation on the question of combating demand, supply, production and illicit trafficking of narcotic drugs. We welcome the initiative taken by the Presidents of Colombia, Bolivia, Peru and the United States, as it symbolizes the resolve of both developed and developing countries to win the war against drugs.

Before concluding, I wish to pay a tribute to the courage and determination of President Virgilio Barco and the Government of Colombia, which have been an inspiration to us all. It was President Barco's appeal that brought us together at this special session. The war against drugs is one that mankind cannot afford to lose. My delegation hopes that the special session, under your guidance, Mr. President, will mark the beginning of an intensified and co-ordinated international effort to end this nightmare.

Mr. COMISSARIO (Mozambique): It is a great pleasure for me and my delegation to see you, Sir, presiding over the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly. Your impressive performance during the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly and at the sixteenth special session on apartheid two months ago constitutes an assurance that the present deliberations will also be successful. As in the past, my delegation will spare no effort in working constructively with you and other the officers of the Assembly as you discharge your noble mandate.

We would also like to commend the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for his commitment to the international efforts for drug control and for the important role he played in the creation of the conditions necessary for the convening of the special session.

For the first time the General Assembly is seated in this historic Hall to consider the question of international co-operation against the illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking in and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. This issue, by its global nature, has emerged as one of the most threatening phenomena in the political, economic, social and cultural existence of nations in our time.

It is particularly alarming to note that the illegal trafficking in narcotic drugs now involves enormous financial resources, which are believed to outbalance those employed in the international oil trade and are surpassed only by the sums involved in the international arms trade. The amount of the resources allocated to the illegal traffic of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances reflects the magnitude of the international criminal network involved in that abominable business.

It is with satisfaction that we note that the current international trend has created a renewed hope that the international community will be able to concentrate

(Mr. Comissario, Mozambique)

on the search for appropriate solutions to all the global challenges facing mankind today. Major political developments are unfolding in different parts of the world. Solutions to some of the most critical and longstanding regional conflicts are no longer abstract dreams but are now an alive and promising reality. Commendable efforts are also being exerted towards exploring different ways and means to settle other complex issues that have for years been a matter of concern to the international community.

However, those positive political developments do not seem to be accompanied by similar progress in the economic and social fields, particularly in the developing countries. The economic and social situation of the developing countries remains critical. The international community has yet to address issues pertaining to those areas. Underdevelopment, the crisis of external debt, the flux of refugees and displaced persons, hunger, poverty, endemic diseases and the degradation of the environment are among the most critical challenges of the present day.

It is within that context that the drug cartels find adequate conditions to flourish, to corrupt societies, to threaten the physical health of peoples and even to jeopardize the very foundations of some States.

From the outset States have realized that the scope of drug trafficking entailed negative consequences, and they have therefore been compelled to adopt both individual and collective measures to cope with that threat. Unfortunately, those measures were revealed to be insufficient to address the drug-trafficking problem and its related consequences effectively. Day after day we witness the increase in drug-related violence and terrorism, which results in incommensurable damage to property and human lives. The international community came to the realization that, for any efforts to succeed in such endeavours, international and concerted action must be taken.

(Mr. Comissario, Mozambique)

With regard to the question of demand and supply, we believe that there is an intrinsic relationship between those two elements. Success in the fight against the scourge of drug trafficking lies essentially in addressing the question of demand and supply in a manner that does not undermine the international consensus that prevails on that matter. An unbalanced and unrealistic approach to those two issues would jeopardize our efforts in the fight against illicit drugs. Where the question of demand is concerned, the Declaration adopted at the Ninth Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries stated that:

> "demand constitutes the essential basis of this problem and ... it is necessary to adopt increasingly effective measures to eliminate illicit drug consumption". (A/44/551, p. 119)

While we note some developments in this regard, namely, the measures adopted by certain countries to reduce the scope of demand, we are nevertheless of the view that there is still room to address further the root causes of the ever-increasing demand for narcotic and psychotropic substances.

Another equally important aspect to be borne in mind if we are succeed in this fight is the need to impose restrictive measures upon the continuing and growing supply of the chemical substances essential for the manufacture of illicit drugs. It is our hope that the present special session will succeed in adopting adequate measures for the control of the export and use of such substances. In that connection we call upon the companies involved in that business to refrain from supplying chemical substances likely to be used in the manufacture of narcotic drugs.

Similarly, great emphasis should be given efforts aimed at encouraging and eliminating illicit crop cultivation through technical and financial support to the

(Mr. Comissario, Mozambique)

countries concerned on a bilateral and multilateral basis in order to work on the economic and social motivations underlying the cultivation of such crops. International co-operation in that sphere should be carried out on the basis of full respect for the elementary principles of international law embodied in the United Nations Charter and international instruments governing relations among States.

(Mr. Comissario, Mozambique)

It is a fact that the issue of narcotic drugs has not yet reached alarming proportions in many African countries, compared to other affected countries in the world. Recent reports indicate the gradual transformation of Africa as a transit point for drug smuggling between other continents. The lack of adequate financial and human resources and technical expertise has prevented many African countries from acting decisively against the growing influx of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

Notwithstanding this fact, owing to the global nature of the problem, which is a matter of concern to all mankind, we deem appropriate the adoption of preventive and remedial measures towards the final goal of a world free from illicit drugs. It is therefore logical that the international community should not wait passively for this disease to assume epidemic proportions in Africa before taking decisive action against it. If Africa is to address this problem effectively, appropriate conditions will have to be created. To that end, it is incumbent upon those States and international organizations that are in a position to do so to provide the necessary financial support and technical assistance.

Although our country is still grappling with priority problems related to war, peace and development, we attach great importance to the fight against drug abuse. Owing to its geographical location in the southern African region, Mozambique constitutes an exit route to the sea and an entry to the hinterland. It is located at what, for the purposes of such illegal business, is a strategic point. Accordingly, we call upon the international community to render effective assistance through the strengthening of judicial, legal and educational systems aimed at increasing Mozambique's ability to cope efficiently with the problem.

(Mr. Comissario, Mozambique)

The adoption, in 1961, of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs constituted an historic landmark in the international community's efforts against the scourge of drug trafficking. These efforts were further enhanced by the 1972 Protocol amending the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 and by the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances. The 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances constituted a step forward. Despite the numerous difficulties that were encountered during the negotiation, the international community was finally able to adopt this Convention, which is the first comprehensive legal instrument on the issue ever concluded by the United Nations. This bears testimony to the important role the United Nations can play in the fight against drug abuse. We are aware that the adoption of conventions does not, per se, solve the problem. The effectiveness of conventions depends largely on political will on the part of all the States concerned. Our efforts should therefore be directed towards reinforcement of the implementation of existing mechanisms.

In the case of all the major issues that have been of special concern to mankind throughout history, there have been peoples and States that, for many reasons, have been in the front line. In this respect, we wish to pay heartfelt tribute to, and to express solidarity with, States and peoples that have distinguished themselves in the fight against illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs. In this regard, the Government and the people of Colombia deserve special praise.

In conclusion, I want to express my delegation's gratitude to Ambassador Hohenfellner of Austria for the distinguished manner in which he conducted the work of the Preparatory Committee and that of the Ad Hoc Committee of

(Mr. Comissario, Mozambique)

this special session. The commendable work done by the Preparatory Committee will certainly contribute greatly to the successful outcome of the session. By achieving success we shall be fulfilling the expectations of our peoples.

Mr. PERERA (Sri Lanka): The convening of a special session of the General Assembly to consider, as a matter of urgency, the question of international co-operation against the illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs amply demonstrates the new dimension and the magnitude of this social evil and the fact that it is perceived as a threat to the health and well-being of millions of people on our planet.

The Secretary-General, in his statement, correctly identified drug abuse as being

> "right at the top of the list of priorities requiring urgent attention from the international community." (A/S-17/PV.1, p. 9)

The problem we are facing today is a serious menace to the life and health of nations, and it constitutes a threat to the cultural and social heritages that have preserved the moral fibre of all societies.

The harmful effects of drug abuse are increasingly a world-wide phenomenon, affecting individual countries and regions to varying degrees. Drug abuse is the genesis of many of the crime-related problems that are faced by almost all countries. While drug abuse affects different age groups, it is a particularly serious problem among young people in many parts of the world. Much of the increase in crime is directly attributable to drug abuse and to the high cost of addiction. The relationship between crime and drug consumption, and the phenomenal increase in juvenile crime, are causing grave concern in the developed and the developing worlds.

(Mr. Perera, Sri Lanka)

Trafficking in narcotics to finance terrorism is a recent phenomenon, which has boosted drug-related revenues to a level second only to those produced by the arms trade. Therefore, trafficking in narcotics - aside from destroying the youth of countries - is now financing terrorist activities aimed at destabilizing the sovereignty of democratically elected Governments.

In this context, I should like to reiterate the views expressed by the Honourable Ranjan Wijeratne, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka, in his statement at the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly:

"An insidious link exists between international terrorism, drug trafficking and the illegal arms trade. Colombia's very survival ... has been jeopardized by the evil plague of drugs. We applaud the efforts made by the President and the Government of Colombia in combating this curse. The community of nations must, on a continuing basis, attack the unholy trinity of terrorism, drug trafficking and the illegal arms trade." (A/44/PV.15, pp. 89-90)

(Mr. Perera, Sri Lanka)

The illicit demand for narcotic drugs is also causing an alarming situation among the international community. Effective strategies for the prevention and reduction of this illicit demand should form part of our response in meeting the overall problem of drug abuse. In strengthening global action in preventive measures for illicit demand, individual countries could and should adopt national programmes of education and information, in particular among the younger generation, not only to forewarn them of the effects of drug abuse but also to make them recognize the harmful economic and social consequences.

Sri Lanka has taken several steps in order to combat the illegal drug trade and drug abuse. Sri Lanka is a party to the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs and its 1972 amendment, and has been associated with the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in the drafting of the Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances from its inception. The National Dangerous Drugs Control Board, established in 1984, is entrusted with the task of policy formulation in respect of drug abuse control in Sri Lanka. Among the Board's activities are projects for the interdiction of illicit traffic in narcotic drugs, prevention and treatment of problems related to the abuse of drugs and a drug abuse monitoring system that includes a narcotics laboratory. We are grateful to the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC) and to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for the financial assistance granted to Sri Lanka under these projects and to the World Health Organization (WHO) as the executing agency.

The success of a plan of action to eradicate the problem of drug abuse and drug trafficking will depend largely on the action undertaken by Governments at national, regional and global levels. International co-operation in the implementation of the plan of action is essential to achieving its goals. We

(Mr. Perera, Sri Lanka)

believe that such co-operation could take the form of bilateral and multilateral co-operation between Governments and the utilization of the United Nations system. Considering the important role to be played by the United Nations, it is all the more necessary for Member States to provide adequate resources in order to carry out the tasks entrusted to it.

Further, we are of the view that regional co-operation in the sphere of drug abuse and drug trafficking could make a positive contribution to our collective efforts to eradicate this problem.

In our region, the seven nations constituting the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) took the initiative in drafting the Regional Convention on Drug Control. The meeting of legal experts of SAARC was concluded in Colombo on 1 February and agreed on the text of a convention prepared by Sri Lanka. The convention pays particular attention to the problems and concerns specific to the region. Some of the elements identified are: eradication of illicit cultivation in combination with rehabilitatory steps through the identification of alternative or substitute crops; treatment, de-addiction and rehabilitation of drug abusers and addicts; effective measures for extradition among SAARC countries, including the provision to treat the SAARC convention itself as the basis for extradition where there is no bilateral extradition treaty; and, finally, mutual legal assistance among SAARC countries in investigation, prosecution and judicial proceedings in relation to drug offences.

The SAARC countries hope to have the convention signed at the forthcoming summit meeting in Colombo.

In this and other regional efforts the United Nations should maintain close collaboration with the regional organizations dealing with drug abuse and drug trafficking and assist them in the field of drug control as adapted to suit specific regional requirements.

(Mr. Perera, Sri Lanka)

We have an unparalleled opportunity to take remedial measures for the elimination of a major social evil of our time. We should not fail to meet this challenge. Positive action by us now would have enormous beneficial effects on generations to come and only a concerted endeavour can make it successful.

Mr. RUKASHAZA (Rwanda) (interpretation from French): Mr. President, the Rwandese delegation is pleased to see you presiding over the General Assembly at its seventeenth special session. After your presidency at the forty-fourth session and at the sixteenth special session devoted to apartheid and its destructive consequences, there can be no doubt that under your guidance our work will once again be crowned with success.

On the eve of the twenty-first century the international community is beset by phenomena that pose real threats to its survival, that is, the debt crisis, growing poverty in the developing countries, deterioration of the environment, and illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. The convening of international meetings on these various problems is evidence of the international community's clear perception of the dangers it faces. The present special session of the General Assembly devoted to finding effective means of combating drug trafficking illustrates the solidarity manifested by the international community in confronting these scourges.

The expansion of the drug scourge is all the more alarming in that it is increasingly reaching social sectors and geographical zones that had previously been untouched and that it is often accompanied by organized criminal activities and various other social and individual disruptions. Confronted with this godless and lawless international criminal organization which transcends borders and threatens the domestic order of States as well as international peace and

(Mr. Rukashaza, Rwanda)

stability, it is clear that only immediate concerted international action can combat it effectively.

This session is without doubt an opportunity for members of the international community to reaffirm their common will to work together in this fight against the merchants of death and social disorder, as well as to strive to increase the effectiveness of the co-ordination machinery at the international level and strengthen United Nations programmes and instruments in the field of narcotics. The Rwandese Republic has confidence in the effectiveness of the United Nations and trusts that the conclusions of the seventeenth special session will be commensurate with the hopes vested in it and enable the international community to take a decisive step towards final victory over the scourge of drugs. Besides the adoption of a political declaration and a global plan of action, the special session should also, and above all, indicate appropriate measures for the prompt and effective implementation of whatever decisions it takes.

Allow me to hail important achievements of the United Nations in the sphere of the fight against drug abuse and illicit trafficking in drugs, in particular the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, as amended by the 1972 Protocol, the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances and the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances - not to mention the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control.

(Mr. Rukashaza, Rwanda)

Beyond declarations of intent, codification and annual adoption of pertinent resolutions, the fight against the illicit traffic and abuse of drugs must now take the shape of concrete action. In that respect, it is essential for all States to accede to the various international instruments pertaining to narcotics, and to give full effect to the principles that they enunciate. It is also essential for them to incorporate these into their national laws. To the extent possible, they could also consider implementing the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances without awaiting its actual entry into force for each particular country.

To the extent of its capabilities, the Rwandese Republic respects the provisions contained in these various international legal instruments. It has also acceded to all the major multilateral treaties pertaining to narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. In the case of the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, the process of ratification is under way in our relevant national bodies.

Although one of the least developed countries, my country has refused to succumb to the temptation of easy wealth offered by the cultivation and illicit traffic in narcotics, and has done its utmost to discourage any potential growers, producers or traffickers in drugs. Indeed, the Rwandese penal code contains provisions prohibiting and punishing the production, possession, sale, distribution and consumption of all substances classified as psychotropic. The code also applies to offences committed abroad as well as internally, with aggravating circumstances where minors are involved. Lastly, in the framework of the prevention of the consumption of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, my authorities seize every opportunity to emphasize and denounce the harmful effects of those products for individuals and society.

(Mr. Rukashaza, Rwanda)

There is a disturbing phenomenon that is assuming substantial proportions in certain third world countries that have traditionally been regarded as safe from drug trafficking. That is particularly true in Africa, where poverty and mounting economic distress has impelled the disadvantaged populations to resort to every possible means to provide for their subsistence. Thus, we find young people and mothers and fathers increasingly engaged in the consumption of psychotropic substances in order to drown their distress for a moment. Others, who are very enterprising, knowledgeable about the drug business and attracted by easy and guaranteed profits in the rich markets of the northern countries, become producers, transporters or transit agents of narcotics for Western wholesalers. In my delegation's opinion, to fight effectively against those new, destructive and suicidal attitudes, we have to reconsider the whole concept of development assistance and redefine North-South relations, which must evolve towards joint responsibility and management of the wealth of our planet.

We reaffirm the Rwandese Government's conviction that the struggle against the abuse of drugs and the illicit drug trafficking must press ahead on three fronts: reduction of supply, reduction of demand, and treatment and rehabilitation of victims.

To reduce supply, we must no longer bring pressure to bear solely on the poor peasants who produce raw materials, but also and particularly on the drug traffickers and the industrialists responsible for the manufacture and sale of the chemicals used for the processing of raw materials into consumable goods.

Reduction of demand is the true point of departure of the chain of illicit drug trafficking. Demand must be reduced by education and preventive action, both for the young and for adults.

(Mr. Rukashaza, Rwanda)

We must treat and rehabilitate drug addicts, because the victims of drug traffickers - usually young people, the future of our society - cannot simply be abandoned to their own resources. It goes without saying that the struggle must be carried out through joint action at the national, regional and international levels, because focusing on one region would prompt the drug traffickers to switch their sphere of operations. Drugs and their traffickers do not recognize States and frontiers.

Thus, any programme aimed against illicit drug trafficking must set in motion effective international co-operation, not just in the reduction of supply and demand for drugs and the control of the laundering of narco-dollars, but also through development assistance for countries threatened by poverty and economic distress.

In respect of the targets of international co-operation in the fight against drugs, while according requisite attention to the countries and regions most severely stricken by this scourge, the efforts of the international community must be equitably addressed towards all countries and regions, because prevention and control are quite as important as law enforcement or rehabilitation.

Special attention in that respect must be given to the developing countries, which, because of the slight level of development of their administrative structures and because public funds have many claims on them in competing with the demands of the drug war, need heightened assistance. The spread of the drug scourge on the African continent and in many of the developing countries proves - if proof is still necessary - that drug traffickers are not stopped by any barrier and that it is becoming increasingly difficult to classify countries as producers, consumers or transit countries. No country must be left aside or remain aloof from the collective battle, because all countries are potentially producers, consumers or transit routes.

(Mr. Rukashaza, Rwanda)

Let me now join the other speakers in appealing to States and organizations that are able to do so to release financial and other resources necessary for the concrete implementation of the global programme of action to fight illicit drug trafficking. The world community has no choice but to make the inevitable sacrifices if it wishes to triumph over that extremely powerful international criminal organization, which is endowed with vast financial resources.

I wish also to offer my Government's full support for the proclamation of the period from 1991 to 2000 as the United Nations decade against drug abuse, a decade that would provide an opportunity for implementing the global programme of action at the threefold level - national, regional and international - so that the beginning of the third millenium will see a world free from drug abuse and illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

Mr. FLEMMING (Saint Lucia): My delegation is gratified by its participation in this urgent and historic seventeenth special session of the General Assembly devoted to the question of international co-operation against illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, with a view to expanding the scope and increasing the effectiveness of such co-operation.

(Mr. Flemming, Saint Lucia)

The subject of our discussion is not new. It has been with us for a rather long time. Starting with the 1912 International Opium Convention of the Hague, every 20 years or so we have come together, ever more anxious and concerned, to hammer out new international agreements aimed at bringing an end to the bane of illegal narcotic drugs. Yet the problem, by all admissions, has now reached pandemic proportions, accounting for nearly $300 billion in world trade annually.

Some 30 years ago, we sought to replace by a single instrument the existing multilateral treaties in the field, in one more attempt to control the production of the raw materials of narcotic drugs. Ten years later, we supplemented it with a convention on psychotropic substances. Two years ago, the Vienna International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking adopted a declaration and a comprehensive outline of future activities in drug abuse control, which continues to be the proper framework for international co-operation in drug control. And, on 19 December 1988, we adopted the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, which sets out a legal framework for international action, and which, when it comes into force, should become the law of the land in each and every one of our States. All of these have been vital steps in a progressive escalating war, which has led us here today to adopt a political declaration and a global programme of action, and to plan, as it were, for the final battle which we all hope will mark the beginning of the end of the war against illegal drugs.

In the many decades since we began the war against illicit drugs and psychotropic substances, we have gone from the doctrine of flexible response to massive retaliation, to collective responsibility, which, Saint Lucia hopes is the raison d'être of this special session.

(Mr. Flemming, Saint Lucia)

It has been said that when power speaks, international law is silent. Perhaps this has for too long been unfortunately true vis-à-vis the traffic in illegal narcotics. It is possible that international law has for too long been silent in the face of the power of the drug lords.

Where war has been waged against illegal drugs, it has more often than not been waged under the purview of the municipal law of a few isolated countries, sorely taxing the financial resources and security apparatus of those States - a purely national approach to a global problem, one or two policemen from a massive global police force doing battle while the others sleep. Those are unnecessarily unequal odds. Is there nothing more sacrosanct than the cult of sovereignty? And here I must pause to pay a special tribute to the Government of Colombia, which has waged a heroic battle against illegal drugs at great cost to itself.

If we are genuinely concerned with, and committed to, those thousands of lives, both official and private, that have been terminated or ruined by the illicit drug trade, and the millions that continue to be threatened until we find a fast, effective and lasting solution, our credo at this session can be nothing less than that of the Spanish Civil War: "Better to die on our feet that to live on our knees." Until now, in many cases we had been brought to our knees by the scourge of illegal drugs.

There is an old Saint Lucian proverb which says: "If you are able to keep your head when all those around you are losing theirs, you may not understand the situation." In the fight against illegal drugs, we have perhaps kept our heads far too long.

As we internationalize the war against illicit drugs and psychotropic substances, global agreements and programmes of action must be supplemented by

(Mr. Flemming, Saint Lucia)

regional, subregional, and special régimes such as that agreed to in Cartagena last 15 February by the Presidents of Bolivia, Colombia, Peru and the United States.

The Cartagena agreement is, of necessity, a watershed producer-consumer agreement for concerted action on both the supply and the demand sides, with some of the necessary economic underpinnings to help mitigate the concomitant economic dislocation which must accompany the strangulation of the supply.

This agreement will no doubt serve as a model for future agreements of this kind. However, a comprehensive approach which takes in the big picture must go beyond action programmes in points "A" and points "B" to encompass the vississitudes of the drug trade in those States which, by virtue of location, are transit points falling in between major suppliers and consumers. This is particularly urgent in the Caribbean, though we in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) have already taken a variety of steps to deal with the problem of illegal drugs transiting our jurisdictions.

Being neither a supplier nor a major consumer of illicit narcotic drugs or psychotropic substances, we in Saint Lucia consider ourselves to be rather fortunate. But my Government considers itself to be at the very foil of the battle against illegal drugs, ever cognizant of Dante's piercing phrase that "the hottest places in Hell are reserved for those who remain neutral in times of great crisis".

Saint Lucia has already adopted laws which elicit stiff penalties for those caught dealing in illegal narcotic drugs. And we have already weaved the esprit des lois of the 1988 Convention into the fabric of our law enforcement. In fact, without waiting for the Convention to come into force, Saint Lucia's Foreign Minister, in addressing the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly last year, made it clear that we intend to "apply without reservation all the provisions of

(Mr. Flemming, Saint Lucia)

the Convention, including extradition, the granting of mutual legal assistance and, where necessary, transfer of proceedings".

In conclusion, it is said that the end of every act is the self-preservation of the actor. My delegation believes that this phrase cogently reflects the seriousness we should all attach to the outcome of this seventeenth special session.

Mr. THOMPSON (Fiji): My delegation warmly congratulates you, Sir, on your unanimous election to preside over this important seventeenth special session of the General Assembly. Your outstanding presidency of the forty-fourth regular session and the sixteenth special session, devoted to apartheid, and the landmark historic achievements of those sessions encourage us to look forward to a similarly productive special session under your distinguished leadership.

Giant strides are being made in areas which until only recently had seen many decades of bitter East-West and North-South rivalry. The international climate seems ready for dramatic progress also to be made in the subject-matter of this special session. There is universal agreement that progress must be made. There is also wide unanimity as to what has to be done. Illicit drug trafficking, drug abuse and their devastating effects on the social and economic fabric of communities and of nations leave no one untouched. They threaten to undermine the very foundations of societies, the family unit and especially the young. The effects are so pervasive that the problem must be addressed quickly, comprehensively and on an international basis.

The 1987 Vienna International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking and the Comprehensive Multildisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control adopted at the Conference, the 1988 Convention against Illicit Trafficking and General Assembly resolution 44/141 of December 1989 are important milestones in the fight. Implementation and associated enforcement actions must be accompanied by complementary economic measures in regions of the world where illicit drug crops are grown. Consumer States have a central role: to encourage this process by providing financial and technical support for crop-substitution subsidies offering long-term markets at realistic prices and undertaking special trade arrangements. The production of drugs becomes inevitable where farmers have no viable alternative

(Mr. Thompson, Fiji)

economic crops to grow. The recent Cartagena Declaration is a clear expression of the determination of the major countries involved in the production and consumption of illicit drugs jointly to take effective action.

Fiji is not a serious consumer country by world standards, although domestically the problem has been increasing and therefore causing us rising concern. However, as a small State it is vulnerable to outside forces, and its very smallness leaves it open to future involvement through becoming a way-station in the illicit traffic of drugs and psychotropic substances. We do not have the technical expertise and equipment adequately to monitor and control the sophisticated evasive techniques of drug traffickers. We are, none the less, doing what we can within the resources at our disposal and in association with regional and international efforts.

We hope that the consensus that emerged at the Vienna Conference will be further strengthened by specific measures to be agreed at this special session. The draft Global Programme of Action and its associated political declaration go a long way towards providing the policy impetus as well as setting out a comprehensive series of measures that will achieve that objective. We note the progress made by the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control around the world, and urge all States to demonstrate their political commitment by supporting it morally and financially.

In dealing with the issue of illicit narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, we must work from a realistic perception of all the components of the problem and their cause-effect relationships even as it is accepted that a concerted attack must be mounted on all three broad categories simultaneously. There are the producers, mainly from seriously underdeveloped countries, whose farmers, without alternative crops, would be condemned to a life without dignity.

(Mr. Thompson, Fiji)

Secondly, there are the consumers, mainly in developed countries, whose buying power provides an irresistible market. Bridging these two are the distributors, the powerful, ruthless and unscrupulous criminal elements who sustain the whole edifice and encourage and feed its growth.

While some may disagree with the contention that we are all equally responsible for the problem, none will dispute that in one way or another we are all affected. It is encouraging to note that many countries have already taken the initiative in devoting considerable financial and manpower resources to assist not only in eradicating drug production and finding alternative crops but also in educating people on the adverse consequences of the consumption of drugs.

Distributors sometimes use small isolated islands as staging or transfer points to evade detection agencies. While this has tended to be more common nearer the major markets, there have also been increasing instances of this happening further afield, thus drawing into the web small countries such as those in the South Pacific that otherwise would not be involved with drugs. Recent reports of interdictions from countries in the region have given cause for concern on how quickly and the extent to which the menace is spreading.

It was out of this recognition of vulnerability that countries of the South Pacific region came together and for some time now have worked co-operatively to devise measures to pre-empt the abuse of drugs and trafficking in them within the region. Pacific island nations individually do not have the financial, technical and human resources necessary for the surveillance, detection, control and eradication of illicit trafficking in drugs and psychotropic substances. But from their experience in other fields our countries have come to realize the vital importance of regional co-operation in enabling a viable and sustainable anti-drug programme to be mounted.

(Mr. Thompson, Fiji)

In this regard our chiefs of police established a South Pacific Islands Criminal Intelligence Network, whose function is to promote the gathering, recording and exchange of data not normally available through established channels concerning the use of Pacific waters and air space for the illicit trafficking of drugs and psychotropic substances. We are aware that enforcement will be more difficult if we do not consider the multijurisidictional scope of narcotics and associated criminal activities.

In conjunction with co-operation between law enforcement agencies we have mounted education programmes for our population at large. This non-specific targeting was decided on because of the low awareness level of our people of the insidiousness and destructiveness of narcotic drugs. The programme has also included the connections drug usage has with that other spreading pestilence, AIDS.

Fiji has recently introduced legislation to stiffen considerably the penalty for drug-related offences. These measures, together with a stepped up education programme, are the national components of a regional initiative we hope will complement activities of other countries and regions.

This special session could not have come at a more appropriate time. The gravity of the problem appears to be matched by an international willingness to tackle it with vigour and determination. Fiji, on its part, will participate in this endeavour to the fullest extent of its capability.

Mr. JAYA (Brunei Darussalam): I wish to express my delegation's delight at seeing you, Sir, presiding over this important special session. Your contribution to the work of the United Nations needs no further comment. We are confident that under your wise stewardship we can bring our work to a successful conclusion.

My delegation welcomes the convening of the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly to consider the question of international co-operation to halt the illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, as a further affirmation that the international community is cognizant that the scourge of drug abuse and illicit trafficking transcends national boundaries and requires concerted, collective and simultaneous action by the international community to combat it. Although this is not the first international meeting to address the question of narcotic drugs, we are very hopeful that we will succeed in achieving what we desire to achieve at this special session.

We express our deep appreciation to the Preparatory Committee for its painstaking efforts in preparing for the special session and in producing two important documents that are before us for consideration. We believe that in our continuing fight to save succeeding generations from the scourge of drugs, we should spare no effort to eradicate narcotic drugs. The adoption in 1961 of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, as amended by the 1972 Protocol, in 1972 of the Convention on Psychotropic Substances, and in 1988 of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances has provided us with the necessary legal framework for international drug control and international co-operation to halt illicit drug trafficking.

(Mr. Jaya, Brunei Darussalam)

Together with those Conventions, we adopted, in 1987, a Declaration and a Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control, designed to guide us in our fight against drug abuse and to suppress illicit trafficking at the national, regional and international levels.

However, as problems of drug abuse and illicit trafficking continue to plague all strata of our society - indeed they have become truly global - we obviously need to have a new strategy in our fight against this scourge. It has long been acknowledged that the global drug problem is complex and multifaceted. No nation is untouched by this problem. It is not associated only with the affluent and developed countris, nor only the developing countries. For once we have a problem - the threat of narcotic drugs - that knows no boundary, that does not depend on levels of economic performance or political ideology. For once we have a common enemy which we must fight together in order to win - and win we must. And for once we recognize that there is a long chain between the producer and the user and that we need to attack every link in the chain if we are to succeed in our fight.

As we daily confront the problem of drug abuse and illicit trafficking, we are often reminded that combating it is going to be a long fight. For reasons that my delegation does not understand, the illicit use of drugs will always appeal to some. Today the illicit use of drugs is not confined to the dark allays of some streets but is seen in plush apartments, homes and offices. Trafficking must indeed be rewarding and the business lucrative if people are willing to risk long-term imprisonment, or even a mandatory death sentence in some countries, including my own.

We have conceded that we cannot fight this global drug problem alone. Nations need to co-operate with each other - co-operation that goes beyond putting signatures on pieces of papers. We believe the United Nations can play a crucial

(Mr. Jaya, Brunei Darussalam)

role. Not only are we unanimous in our desire to end the scourge of narcotic drugs; we are also unanimous in our view that only through a global programme of action can we free our people from this scourge. As the Secretary-General said in his statement at the beginning of this special session,

"[Drug abuse] is by its nature truly international, and it demands a co-ordinated international response. Only the United Nations can orchestrate that response." (A/S-17/PV.1, p. 9)*

The global programme of action that is to be considered by the special session is comprehensive enough in that, inter alia, it recognizes that both the demand and the supply problems associated with narcotic drugs must be addressed. This strong correlation was in fact given prominence at the recent summit conference held in Cartagena, Colombia, by the Presidents of Bolivia, Colombia, Peru and the United States, during which they pledged to attack the drug problem from every angle - production, distribution, finance and use. In particular, the production of drugs cannot be reduced without giving due support to crop-substitution efforts, as that would only perpetuate the poverty and social problems of those people that have relied on the illicit cultivation of narcotic plants for their economic survival. We ourselves are of the view that the circle of death created by narcotic drugs does not necessarily begin or end with supply but also encompasses the increasing demand. A two-pronged strategy - eliminating the illicit demand for narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, and controlling the supply - should therefore be put in place.

While the incidence of drug abuse in Brunei Darussalam has been rather minimal, my country nevertheless maintains vigilance in its own fight against drug abuse and illicit trafficking. Our Government's effort is aimed at eliminating

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* Mr. Pawlak (Poland), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Jaya, Brunei Darussalam)

both demand and supply, and includes preventive measures in the form of civic education to all students about the dangers and harmful effects of drugs, to prevent them from being introduced to narcotic drugs. It has also been a practice of the school authorites, with the collaboration of the health authorities, to do random checking by means of urine tests to detect drug use among students. The Government has also organized frequent campaigns nationally to inform the public of the dangers of narcotic drugs.

The establishment of the Narcotics Control Bureau under the Prime Minister's Office in October last year demonstrates how serious my Government is about eradicating the drug-abuse problem in our country. The newly formed Bureau will concentrate wholly and totally on enforcing the law against drug-abuse activities in Brunei Darussalam.

In just the year since its creation, the Bureau has had several successes in arresting "ANT" traffickers and addicts and has seized small amounts of heroine No. 4 and heroine No. 3 as well as a small quantity of cannabis.

To curtail drug-related activities further, Brunei Darussalam has introduced tough laws on drugs in order to send clear signals to the people that drug abuse and illicit trafficking are serious offences. We are aware of our vulnerability as a transit route for drug traffickers, and we want it to be known that they will be dealt with seriously and to the fullest extent of the law if apprehended.

We are, however, mindful that all these efforts need the co-operation of other States to be successful. For that reason we have made it a cornerstone of our anti-drug policy to work closely with countries in the region, particularly the members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

I wish to conclude by expressing the hope that what we here have pledged to do in the last few days is only the beginning of what we intend to do in the years to

(Mr. Jaya, Brunei Darussalam)

come. The assertiveness with which we have expressed our respective countries' problems and positions should be matched by the tenacity of our actions. If the international community is serious about eradicating the scourge of narcotic drugs, then it must be ready to place all available means at our disposal and be prepared to address the problem at its root causes.

Mrs. CHACON (Costa Rica) (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the people and the Government of Costa Rica, and on my own behalf, I am privileged to echo the congratulations already offered to Ambassador Garba on his election by acclamation to the presidency of the General Assembly at the seventeenth special session. That constitutes recognition of the outstanding ability and qualifications he has demonstrated in carrying out his important responsibilities. He has successfully guided the debate at these meetings, which have brought the entire world community together in the quest for viable and effective alternatives to confront this crime against humanity through international co-operation.

I am honoured to be addressing the General Assembly at this special session dealing with a problem of such crucial importance to mankind. We are here to show our concern and our solidarity with the international community against the scourge of the illegal consumption and traffic of narcotics and the activities of organized crime related to those illicit operations.

We wish to pay a tribute to the dedication and commitment of the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, to the efforts of the United Nations to promote international control of the illicit traffic in narcotics and psychotropic substances through new international legal instruments to confront this new dimension of crime and through strengthened international co-operation.

As Ambassador Garba has said so eloquently, this historic gathering is the first special session of the General Assembly to deal with this very difficult issue. We know the danger to mankind posed by this problem: it is an escalating threat to the economic, social, cultural, ideological, political and legal structure of peoples.

(Mrs. Chacon, Costa Rica)

In that connection, the President of Costa Rica, Oscar Arias Sanchez, has said:

"Today, when the economies of developing countries are in crisis and when broad sectors of the population are afflicted by poverty, it is easy for people to fall prey to the scourge of drug trafficking. That is no accident, and it highlights the need to take drastic steps against the real traffickers. It also teaches us that it is urgent to promote social and economic development and to distribute its fruits fairly, that it is indispensible to create jobs, and that it is imperative to provide housing for families and educate thousands upon thousands of human beings.

"That is why co-operation among nations is so important, along, above all, with understanding by developed countries for those that are not developed. So long as the terms of trade are unfair in terms of quantities and prices of goods, so long as the injustice of the heavy external debt persists, so long as conflict and the arms trade are promoted, the ground will continue to be fertile for the further growth of drug trafficking. Without that understanding and without assistance, our efforts to eliminate that plague will remain futile."

That is why we applaud the recent Cartagena summit by the Presidents of Bolivia, Colombia, Peru and the United States, which manifested a new dimension in multilateral co-operation.

We resoundingly declare our solidarity with the people and the Government of Colombia, victims of the particular ferocity of the drug traffickers and of the organized crime associated with them. In many countries, numerous officials have paid with their lives for their efforts to control this illicit trade.

(Mrs. Chacon, Costa Rica)

We are keenly aware of the danger this problem poses for all the world's peoples. My country is therefore committed to a crusade against drug trafficking. The struggle against psychotropic substances stands high among the concerns of Costa Ricans and, of course, their national authorities.

Our Government has never for a moment doubted that it must charge and prosecute drug traffickers wherever they are found. It is clear that the task of eradicating the drug trade is a duty that must be shared by all of society. Despite the continuous efforts of our nations to do away with this plague, it has in recent decades grown to previously unimagined dimensions. The powerful international criminal organizations that run this vile business have already dangerously undermined the economic and social order of many States and are threatening to destroy their sovereignty and political stability. The millions in profits reaped by those criminal organizations are turning them into veritable financial empires that can lull consciences and invade, contaminate and corrupt institutions. The drug trafficking organization promotes venality among certain officials thus turning them into the tools of its perverse designs.

That is why we urge that laundering money derived from illicit trade be defined as a separate crime, as it already is in Costa Rican law, as an effective way of wresting economic and political power from these transnationals of organized crime, through the adoption of measures that would gain control of individuals, banks, corporations and enterprises with activities in the economic, financial and/or securities system.

In keeping with its own problems and as a country that, because of its geographic position, can be used as a transit point for drugs and money laundering, Costa Rica has shouldered its responsibility to co-operate with United Nations efforts in this realm. We signed the 1988 United Nations Convention against

(Mrs. Chacon, Costa Rica)

Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and have been working towards ratification of that Convention by our legislature.

Moreover, the Government of Costa Rica has promulgated new and effective legal instruments to suppress drug trafficking and related activities, implementing some provisions of the new Vienna Convention. We have updated our legal code, providing for harsher punishment for various crimes, including the seizure and forfeiture of goods derived from these illicit activities, and extending these provisions to those who abet drug trafficking.

(Mrs. Chacon, Costa Rica)

Our Government has complemented those steps with others that involve denying parole and pardons to all offenders convicted of drug-related crimes. We have set up a national policy-making body on drugs with responsibility for co-ordinating the actions of public and private institutions. This year, we began implementation of a national plan to prevent drug addiction, drawn up by the Ministries of Education and of Health, and it will be extended to include all the country's towns and communities. Beginning in 1990 our Government will begin the rehabilitation of drug addicts in all the country's hospitals, at no cost to the beneficiary. In addition, steps have been taken to strengthen institutional and local machinery to meet the changing needs of our communities and the new dimensions of crime and delinquency.

Together, all nations must shoulder the responsibility incumbent upon us. We believe that concerted action is imperative, both by countries at the domestic level and by the international community as a whole, within the context of an integrated approach to take better advantage of the world-wide technological and financial resources that are available for combating this scourge, thus making it easier for us to guide and co-ordinate the implementation of policies, programmes and projects in this area. There must be a reduction in both drug supply and drug demand. Hence, it is indispensable that United Nations capabilities be strengthened so that it can become the principal co-ordinating centre in our joint war against drugs. We urge all the developed countries to consider ways in which they might grant more resolute technological and financial support to enhancing the effectiveness of United Nations bodies in their programmes to deal with drug abuse.

It is for that reason that we warmly welcome the attitude of the Government of Japan, which, through the Japan International Co-operation Agency (JICA), is

(Mrs. Chacon, Costa Rica)

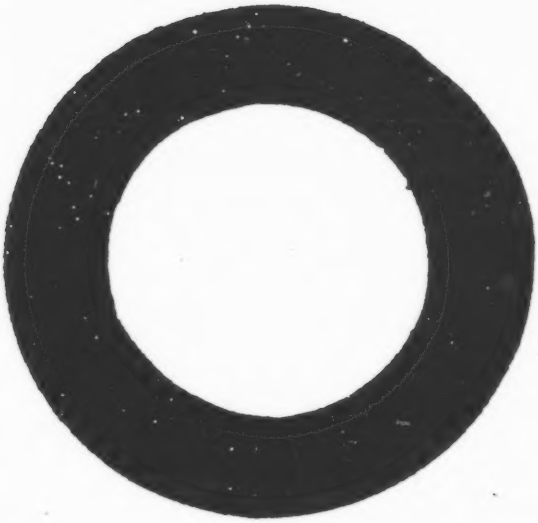
sponsoring and financing a regional training and technological co-operation project for Latin America and the Caribbean under the title "Effective Measures for Combating Drug Crimes and Improving the Administration of Penal Justice," which is being implemented through two United Nations Institutes for the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders, the Latin American Institute for the Prevention of Crime (ILANUD), based in San Jose, Costa Rica, and the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFAI), both splendid examples of successful interregional co-operation worthy of emulation by other nations and bodies.

We deem it to be both appropriate and necessary for the United Nations, in its fight against drug trafficking, to step up its co-ordination and to call for the greatest possible involvement of such subregional Institutes as ILANUD, UNAFEI and similar bodies with a view to making more effective use of their technological and material resources and the achievements they bodies have already made.

We should also like to express our support for the initiative to draft a new convention on drug-demand reduction, and we await positive results from the ministerial meeting to be held in London in April on that issue and the war on cocaine at the initiative of the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Margaret Thatcher.

In conclusion, I should like to quote the words of the President of the Republic of Costa Rica, Oscar Arias Sanchez, before the Supreme Court in San Jose, Costa Rica, in 1988, when he signed into law the new Law on the Unauthorized Use of Psychotropic Substances and Drugs and Related Activities. At that time, he said:

> "I appeal to all present here to bear in mind night and day that the enemy is powerful, that it is well organized and that it has no scruples whatsoever in suborning the weak-willed and in seeking to win over the fainthearted."



Mr. BAYER (Hungary): It is a great honour for me to reaffirm the willingness of the Government of Hungary to co-operate with the international community in the fight against drug abuse and illicit trafficking. There are important changes in Hungary, and we are convinced that the free flow of peoples and goods will be beneficial for the country. However, we are aware that there are other consequences of current developments, among them the increased risk of the propagation of drug abuse. The future of the development of the drug problem in Hungary depends only partially on our own efforts. We will benefit or suffer from the successes or failures of the other European countries. Our commitments are motivated equally by international solidarity and by self-interest.

The willingness of Governments to act against the abuse of drugs and illicit trafficking is clearly demonstrated by the statements of all delegations. The next step, the follow-up, has been well described by several speakers. It entails a translation of political will into action.

It has also been suggested that we should turn to history and learn from the successes and failures of narcotics control. In that context I would like to offer some examples for consideration. The propagation of opium abuse in the Middle East and all the clinical symptoms of opium addiction were precisely described by Al-Biruni, Avicenna's contemporary. Warnings in the tenth century, a follow-up in the twentieth century. The first Opium War broke out on 4 April 1840, 150 years ago. The first step against the free flow of opium into China, the consequence of the Opium Wars, was taken 70 years later at the Shanghai Commission in 1909. The most recent example is offered by precursors: the control of precursors of narcotic drugs was solved in 1961; the omission of a similar provision from the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances led to a great number of semi-legal transaction-and-diversion cases, and it was necesary to wait 17 years, that is, until the adoption of the 1988 Convention, to fill that gap.

(Mr. Bayer, Hungary)

Without continuing an enumeration of hundreds of examples of the thousand-year, 70-year or 17-year delays in international actions, I would like to draw attention to the importance of timing. Speedy, concentrated action is the only efficient weapon against the flexibility of illicit traffickers.

(Mr. Bayer, Hungary)

In 1988 I had the honour to be Chairman of Committee II of the Plenipotentiary Conference in Vienna, and since the adoption of the 1988 Convention I have been an optimist. At the beginning of the Conference it seemed impossible to reconcile the opposing views and standpoints of Governments. The adoption of the 1988 Convention constitutes a good example of the translation of political will into an international instrument. It is now our duty to translate the instrument into active operations. Hungary has already introduced some provisional control measures. The most important of these restricts the export and import of schedule-I precursors to a single company, which is obliged to apply the export-declaration system of the 1971 Convention.

Success depends mainly on Government actions, but my delegation agrees with those who are in favour of strengthening the role of the United Nations. This should include a review of the Organization's activities by a group of experts. Hungary supports the proposal that the General Assembly should receive, on a continuous basis, information on the development of the fight against drug abuse and illicit traffic, but priority should be given to ensuring creation of the conditions necessary for the proper functioning of the relevant United Nations bodies - the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the International Narcotics Control Board. There is an urgent need for new mechanisms and new information systems to be developed because the resources at the disposal of these bodies do not meet the requirements of the conventions or the requests of the General Assembly. Therefore, Hungary is in favour of strengthening the United Nations drug-control units in order to facilitate proper functioning of the international drug-control system. The increasing efficacy of the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC) is greatly appreciated by Hungary. I should like to assure the Executive Director that our Government is prepared to continue its co-operation with UNFDAC.

(Mr. Bayer, Hungary)

We sincerely hope that the political will that is now being demonstrated will be translated into prompt and successful action against illicit cultivation, production, manufacture and trafficking. At the same time, it must be taken into consideration that the possibilities of controlling supply are limited, while the number of substances that can be abused is practically unlimited. Consequently, unless demand-reduction proposals are improved, it will be unrealistic to expect the drug-abuse phenomenon to be eliminated through the use of law-enforcement methods alone.

We are convinced that the adoption of the political declaration and the global plan of action will constitute major progress in international co-operation against the drug menace. I reiterate that Hungary is willing to take an active part in the further development of the international drug-control system and to assist, as far as possible, those developing countries that suffer most from the activities of illicit traffickers and from the consequences of the existing illicit demand.

Mr. KARUKUBIRO-KAMUNANWIRE (Uganda): In the course of the general debate on the question of narcotic-drug abuse and illicit trafficking, unanimity has emerged on its unprecedented and devastating socio-economic and political consequences. We agree with the many representatives who have stated that, besides causing moral and physical degradation, drug abuse has encouraged corruption and is undermining the rule of law. Illicit trafficking has given rise to organized crime, undermined legitimate economies, and threatened the stability and security of Governments.

Uganda is totally committed to fighting the war on drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking. Accordingly, we welcome the convening of a special session of the General Assembly to deal specifically with this problem. We support efforts towards the elaboration and adoption of a global programme of action on drug-abuse

(Mr. Karukubiro-Kamunanwire, Uganda)

control, which should be of a comprehensive and multidisciplinary nature. Its objectives, strategies and goals should be forward-looking, balanced and realistic to take the dynamic international atmosphere into account. Its programmes and activities should be practical and action-oriented and should fully respect the national jurisdiction and sovereignty of States.

We hoped that the Commission on Narcotic Drugs would elaborate on the draft programme of action and would submit concrete and action-oriented consensus proposals to the General Assembly at this special session. We regret its inability to reach agreement on crucial substantive issues. The Assembly should address these elements in their totality at this session, bearing in mind all the pressing priorities of the United Nations.

The United Nations has a special responsibility to ensure effective co-ordination, implementation and follow-up of all programmes and activities. We support the process of reform, as approved by the General Assembly in resolution 41/213, aimed at strengthening the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations to enable it to meet future challenges and responsibilities. We maintain that the reform process should be balanced and must remain a comprehensive whole throughout the United Nations. We would be sceptical of piecemeal reforms.

Uganda supports the strengthening of United Nations drug-control units to enable them to implement their mandates fully with a high degree of cost-effectiveness and efficiency. Resources allocated to various Secretariat units, including those dealing with drug-control programmes and activities, should be put to optimum use. A special appeal should be made to the donor community to provide additional, untied voluntary contributions for these programmes and activities to complement regular budgetary resources.

(Mr. Karukubiro-Kamunanwire, Uganda)

Uganda recognizes the importance of compliance with, and effective implementation of, the international drug-control treaties to which it subscribes. We are in the process of incorporating into our national policies and programmes appropriate legislative measures to combat drug abuse and drug trafficking. We appeal for tangible support and assistance from the international community and the United Nations, including its system. Institutions like the United Nations African Institute for Crime Prevention and Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI) in Uganda, still in its infancy, need such assistance. This will enable them to undertake programmes and research aimed at preventing crime and drug trafficking. My Government is totally committed to ensuring that UNAFRI is operational. This has already been demonstrated by the considerable Government expenditures and facilities it has extended to the Institute.

(Mr. Karukubiro-Kamunanwire, Uganda)

We are rather disapppointed that, despite the exhaustive consultations with the relevant Secretariat units and United Nations agencies at every stage, including the adoption of the Statute establishing the Institute, new conditionalities have now emerged which continue to delay its implementation. We make a special appeal to the parties concerned to consider the matter and facilitate implementation of the UNAFRI project as soon as possible.

We urge all States to support measures to combat drug abuse and drug trafficking at the regional, interregional and global levels. Existing legislative mandates in this area provide a good basis for their co-operation at various levels. International co-operation should supplement national efforts. In our view, efforts to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking will be futile without the co-operation of affluent societies in bringing to an end the demand for and consumption of illicit drugs and psychotropic substances.

The question of the underlying root causes of illicit drug trafficking must be addressed in a comprehensive manner. Uganda maintains that there is an inescapable linkage between increased illicit drug trafficking to affluent countries and the collapse of export primary commodity prices. As my Second Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of For-ign and Regional Affairs had the occasion to state at this rostrum on 9 October 1989:

> "It is no accident that the countries most involved in drug production are also dependent on primary commodities, especially coffee. Putting the international coffee agreement in jeopardy could not ... have been helpful in the fight against drug trafficking". (A/44/PV.24, p. 34-35)

In conclusion, Uganda is at one with the Secretary-General's opening remarks at this special session that any lasting solution to the problem of illicit trafficking must encompass all its ramifications, including enhanced co-operation

(Mr. Karukubiro-Kamunanwire, Uganda)

for development, debt relief, assurances of markets and reasonable prices for legal export commodities. Adopting short-term measures, including military options, will not change the present equation.

Mr. TREIKI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (interpretation from Arabic): My delegation is pleased to see Mr. Garba presiding over the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly. His long experience and diplomatic skill will undoubtedly help us to achieve this session's aims.

I should also like to express my delegation's appreciation to the Preparatory Committee for its achievements.

At this seventeenth special session the General Assembly is discussing a problem that is similar in its dimensions to the threat posed by nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. That problem is the dangerous illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, its processing, cultivation and abuse. This trade has blossomed, and its smugglers and traffickers have become so ruthless that they constitute a threat to world security and safety, paralysing the most vulnerable sector of the population in any community - the youth. It is responsible for the worsening of socio-economic backwardness in most of the countries of the world, including third-world countries, which are suffering from economic problems as well as problems relating to political security and safety.

My country does not suffer from the problem of narcotic drugs to the extent evident in other countries because it is neither a producer country nor a consumer country, though because of its geographic position some traffickers use it as a transit country. Even so, we are in accord with other countries, in particular those now waging a war against the narcotic-drug gangs, based on our solidarity with the international community in its determination to control drugs.

(Mr. Treiki, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

My country has taken the following measures: the promulgation of Law No. 23 of 1971 relating to drugs, which calls for the imposition of deterrent sanctions on those who deal in, traffic in or take narcotic drugs; the establishment of a national committee - which includes in its membership elements of justice, health, education, information and customs - to grapple with this very serious phenomenon; bilateral agreements with neighbouring countries; the establishment of special machinery to combat drugs in all transit areas in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and public awareness programmes. We exchange information with Interpol as well as with other related international organizations, and we participated in the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, held in Vienna from 17 to 26 June 1987.

Each year on 27 June we observe an international day to combat drugs.

This matter requires of the international community a collective, simultaneous and concerted effort. My delegation believes in the enhancement of international co-operation as a way of combating illicit production, supply, distribution and trafficking and the demand for drugs and psychotropic substances. We also affirm the very important role of the United Nations in this regard, and therefore call for the standardization of all its related machinery. We fully support it in every way possible.

My country is concerned with this very serious problem and committed to its solution. For this reason we have acceded to the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, as amended by the 1972 Protocol. We have also acceded to the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substance, and we are about to ratify the 1988 Vienna Convention.

As members of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs for the next four years, we should like to affirm our keen desire to participate effectively and positively in

(Mr. Treiki, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

all its work. We shall co-operate and co-ordinate with the other members to the fullest extent possible so that the Commission's work may be crowned with success.

My country was one of the first to endorse the holding of this special session, to which we attach particular importance. We hope it will be successful.

In conclusion I should like to pay tribute to the role played by the United Nations machinery in combating the scourge of narcotic drugs. By the same token, we are pleased to pay tribute also to Colombia for its initiative at the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly on the basis of which this special session has been organized.

(Mr. Treiki, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

We also appreciate and support the measures taken by Colombia against the drug traffickers. We should also like to express our pleasure and praise for all the efforts made and measures taken in Cartagena. They are a very positive sign in the framework of all the international efforts to grapple with the dangers of the scourge.

Mr. CUEVAS FIGUEROA (Guatemala) (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the delegation of Guatemala, I should like at the outset to express our pleasure at seeing Mr. Garba presiding over the work of the General Assembly at its seventeenth special session devoted to strengthening the struggle being waged by the United Nations and the international community in general against a scourge that is deeply harming the integrity of the human person, undermining our societies, jeopardizing international peace and security, and thus moving to destroy the emergence of democracy, as is the case in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The United Nations is gathering at a special session of the General Assembly to act in consonance with one of the principles and purposes that inspire its Charter - to achieve international co-operation in solving international problems. Indeed, the struggle against the illicit production, supply, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotic drugs is an issue that affects all nations, large and small, regardless of their political ideology or their economic situation, let alone whatever efforts their Governments may have made to foster the well-being of their people and to promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. We are convinced that the United Nations must be the focal point for co-ordinating joint action and that it should play a more significant role in that field.

The Presidents of Central America, aware of the gravity of the problem and recognizing that, given our geographical location, greater co-ordination is

(Mr. Cuevas Figueroa, Guatemala)

indispensable in our struggle against drug trafficking, signed the Tela Declaration in Honduras on 7 August 1989, condemning in the strongest possible terms the traffic and abuse of drugs and committing themselves to promulgating laws and adopting drastic measures to prevent Central American countries from turning into bases for the drug traffickers.

With those goals in mind, regional and international co-operation will be sought. Pacts will be signed with nations affected by that illegal traffic, and such steps will be taken as to enable new and effective control of drug trafficking. So far as Guatemala is concerned, our Executive has dispatched to the Congress of our Republic a series of laws and amendments to our judicial system and penal code, as well as to the implementation of criminal trial law.

Guatemala will take an active part at the forthcoming regional and subregional meetings to deal with the elaboration of conventions and regulations on the issue.

The delegation of Guatemala would like to emphasize its admiration and respect for President Barco of Colombia, which he has particularly earned in declaring open war on drug traffickers in his country, who are threatening to tear apart his country's society and long-standing democratic system. Colombia has been the victim of the drug traffickers' economic and military power, obtained by the enormous gains and wealth derived from illicit drug trafficking and related criminal activity. Colombian judges have paid with their very lives or have had to seek exile abroad. In one case, a judge on a diplomatic mission was cut down after he had distinguished himself in his particular struggle against that evil affecting society and mankind in general.

It is extremely alarming that illicit drug trafficking and related criminal activities are also intertwined with terrorist activity and are swelling the arms trade and illicit and secret transfers of arms. All of this is being used as a means to acquire funds that are then used by guerrilla and subversive forces, which

(Mr. Cuevas Figueroa, Guatemala)

rise up in arms against established democratic governments, jeopardizing the peace, stability and security of their own societies, contrary to the spirit of détente that is otherwise spreading internationally.

Guatemala considers valid the principle of shared responsibility in the struggle against drug abuse and the illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. However, one must stress that there is little the developing countries can do in the face of their progressively worsening economic and social situation. The international economic environment is very unfavourable indeed. The prices of commodities and agricultural export goods have remained depressed and, in the case of coffee and cocoa, have dropped lower still, threatening dangerously to expand the already grinding poverty.

The imposition of protectionist and restrictive measures that shut out products from the developing countries to the markets of the developed countries, the servicing of external debt, the high rates of interest, the fluctuation of exchange rates, the flight of capital and the rather dismal prospects for development make it necessary to reflect on the direct link between economic well-being and the fight against illicit drug trafficking.

(Mr. Cuevas Figueroa, Guatemala)

In his annual report to the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General expressed his desire for the United Nations to play a fundamental role, as envisaged in the Charter, in promoting social progress and the attainment of higher living standards for our people. At the same time, he also warned us that the progress that has indeed been made in the international political arena may prove precarious if the economic arena continues to be marked by adverse trends with respect to the large majority of the people of the world. The developed countries must seriously reflect on the import of those wise words.

The adverse economic situation confronting the developing world has forced those Governments to slash investments in the social field and to cut programmes that would redound to the economic and social advancement of their neediest people. It has resulted in higher rates of underemployment and has drastically cut the per capita income of their people.

Central America is now characterized by economic levels similar to those that were recorded in 1960. This means that our people have become poorer and that their chances for seeing a better world are receding into an ever more distant future. The action plan which is to emerge from this session must also take this situation into consideration.

We believe that crop-substitution programmes can be effective provided, however, that the people in the countryside can be guaranteed an adequate and appropriate income with fair prices that will make it worthwhile to produce those crops. We hope that crop substitution will not lead to renewed economic deterioration and wild swings in the prices of the products that would result from such substitution. If that were to happen, any such undertaking would end in total failure. The people of our societies cannot afford such an outcome. All of us, as human beings, must share the wealth and well-being. The world, which is

(Mr. Cuevas Figueroa, Guatemala)

growing ever more interdependent and marked by increasing interrelationships, belongs to us all equally.

Guatemala hopes that the meeting held in Cartegena that brought together the Presidents of Bolivia, Colombia, Peru and the United States will indeed yield the dividends expected. We hope that within the framework of full respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and the right of peoples to self-determination, they will strengthen international co-operation and reinforce the struggle against the production, supply, demand and illicit distribution and trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

Finally, Guatemala here today before this Assembly expresses its faith in and determination to pursue the struggle to the utmost so that we may secure the eradication of this terrible scourge which is so devastating to all mankind, and pledges that, notwithstanding our scarce economic resources, we shall continue with the struggle, hoping for and expecting the support of the international community to help us in this struggle we have undertaken today.

Mr. MENDEZ (Philippines): On behalf of the Government and the people of the Philippines, I extend to Mr. Garba felicitations on his assumption of the presidency of this very important special session of the General Assembly to consider the question of international co-operation against the illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. The excellent skills he has shown in presiding over the work of the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly and of the special session on the destructive consequences of apartheid in South Africa leave us with no doubt that he will steer this session to a successful conclusion.

(Mr. Mendez, Philippines)

The Philippines would also like to commend the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, for his deep commitment to the fight against illicit drugs and drug abuse.

This special session could not have been held at a more propitious time. Our world is now confronted by a monstrous multi-dimensional plague that destroys the fabric of society, seriously hinders economic and social growth and endangers the national security, sovereignty and political stability of countries. The plague victimizes people of all ages and social classes. Today, even unborn babies are among the million victims of drug abuse. Indeed, the war against drug abuse and illicit trafficking has now become a gigantic task that challenges members of the international community to act fast and in a concerted manner. There is hardly any country represented in this body that is not affected by the problem. As the drug menace knows no boundaries, no territory or people is immune from it. The worsening situation calls for genuine international co-operation. With the holding of this special session, the Philippines is most pleased that the momentum for international co-operation generated at the 1987 International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in Vienna is kept alive.

This special session offers yet another opportunity to demonstrate the unequivocal resolve of all countries to fight drug abuse and help its victims. It is an opportunity to work together and to send the strongest signal possible to the merchants of death and destruction that there is no safe haven for them.

The Philippines hopes that this session will adopt an action-oriented global programme of action that would complement the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control (CMO), a consensus document from the Vienna Conference. We cannot over-emphasize the importance of a programme of

(Mr. Mendez, Philippines)

action that takes care of the complex concerns of all parties - the producer, the consumer and the transit countries. What economic forces propel this $500 billion activity? As my delegation sees it, both demand-pull factors and supply-push factors are culprits.

The Philippines is seriously committed to the fight against drug abuse. Fully aware of the adverse consequences of drug abuse and drug related crimes on the economic, social, cultural and moral development of its people, the Philippines has continuously devoted its efforts and limited resources towards the eradication of drug abuse, the treatment and rehabilitation of drug abuse victims and the suppression of illegal trafficking.

(Mr. Mendez, Philippines)

Confronted with the growing threats of drug abuse, a proposal has been submitted to the Philippine Congress for the restoration of the death penalty for acts involving the illegal importation, manufacture, sale, administration, delivery, distribution and transportation of drugs. The cultivation and culture of Indian hemp and the opium poppy shall also be punishable by life imprisonment or death. The new proposals would also impose life imprisonment, in addition to absolute perpetual disqualification to hold public office for government officials, judges and prospecutors and members of police agencies and the armed forces who in any manner abet or assist in the escape of a person suspected of or charged with violations of the aforementioned punishable acts, which are considered heinous crimes under the Dangerous Drug Act of 1972.

The Philippines extends full co-operation to our neighbours in the region and other members of the international community in its fight against drug abuse and illicit trafficking. This co-operation continues to produce positive results.

The war against drugs imposes a serious burden on the fragile economies of the least developed and developing countries like ours. The failures of those countries in some aspects of this war do not spring from lack of resolve or commitment but rather from lack of needed resources. Assistance in the form of technical expertise, equipment, training or finanicial help should be made available to that group of countries.

The Philippines strongly believes that international drug-control agreements and treaties play an important role in the global effort to combat drug abuse and drug trafficking. We consider the 1988 Convention against Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances as yet another vehicle that could take us ahead in the fight against illicit trafficking. It supplements the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs and the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Sub ances in meeting the challenge posed by the current global upsurge in illicit drug

(Mr. Mendez, Philippines)

trafficking and associated organized criminal activisties. The Philippines, which is a State Party to the first two Conventions, has also signed the 1988 Convention. I am pleased to state that most of the provisions of that Convention have been appropriately covered by existing national legislation of the country.

As we approach the end of our special session I wish to say how heartened and encouraged the Philippines is by the rare display of international political will this special session represents. The cry of alarm could not have been sounded any sooner. We must for ever remain vigilant, for at stake is the future of our children, the world's future. The key is political will and international co-operation.

It is in this light that the Philippines welcomes the Cartagena summit held last week and the holding of the World Ministerial Summit to Reduce the Demand for Drugs and to Combat the Cocaine Threat, to be held in London this April.

We cannot afford to waver in exercising our political will, for we know that the problem is monstrous and formidable but definitely not insurmountable.

The PRESIDENT: We have heard the last speaker for this afternoon.

I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

May I remind members that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/41, statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. QURESHI (Pakistan): In his statement to the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly today, the representative of the Kabul régime has made certain allegations and misleading statements which need to be clarified and corrected.

(Mr. Qureshi, Pakistan)

According to his statement, certain leading members of the Afghan interim Government and some local commanders inside Afghanistan belonging to the Afghan resistance are involved in the illicit drug trade. Apart from quoting certain unconfirmed newspaper reports, he has furnished no evidence to support his allegations. On the other hand, there are certain facts we should like to put before the Assembly.

First, during the month of February of this year, 200 kilogrammes of heroin were seized in Peshawar, Pakistan, by our drug enforcement agencies. The seal and the packing of the drugs and the interrogation of the accused confirmed that the heroin had been purchased in Afghanistan and refined from opium to heroin in that country.

Secondly, the representative of the Kabul régime has in his statement admitted that there is a widespread poppy cultivation in the Nangarhar and Kandahar province. Therefore, by his own admission, he has confirmed the fact of widesread poppy cultivation.

The reports of Interpol and the International Narcotics Control Board have also confirmed the extensive cultivation of poppies in those areas. According to the intelligence reports of the Pakistan Narcotics Control Board, there are also huge areas under poppy cultivation in the Helmand valley in Afghanistan, which is adjacent to the Iranian border.

Thirdly, according to different international agency reports, the net production of opium in Afghanistan was 400 metric tons in 1987; in 1988 it jumped to 1,000 metric tons; and in 1989, the indications are that it reached 1,500 metric tons. This clearly shows the neglect and apathy on the part of the Kabul régime in controlling the production of opium in Afghanistan.

(Mr. Qureshi, Pakistan)

Fourthly, the superabundance of opium and other drugs in Afghanistan is further confirmed by the Kabul representative's own statement highlighting the huge amounts of narcotic seizures. These seizures cannot be a spillover from any other country as there is hardly any demand in Afghanistan: as the Kabul representative himself admitted, Afghanistan has no more than 10,000 drug addicts.

We would welcome any satellite monitoring system of any international agency so that the world community could find out for itself the widespread poppy cultivation in Afghanistan.

For its part, Pakistan is prepared to provide evidence and prove to the International Narcotics Control Board or Interpol that heroin laboratories exist on the Afghan side of the borders.

What is abundantly clear from the statement of the Kabul representative is that the Kabul régime is not in control of the situation in Afghanistan. The statement reflects the unsettled political scene in Afghanistan. It makes it clear, above all, that an effective Government of Afghanistan that can deal with the drug menace and other problems facing the country can only be possible after a broad-based and representative Government is established in Kabul.

The statement demonstrates the unrepresentative and ineffective nature of the present régime in Kabul and the pressing need for its replacement by a Government acceptable to the suffering people of Afghanistan.

Mr. MORA GODOY (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): It is not Cuba that is the judge of United States actions. In this very Hall, in December, the General Assembly adopted a resolution condemning the United States invasion of Panama; only a few days ago the Commission on Human Rights also did so. The international community has condemned the invasion, regarding it as a violation of international law and the principles of the United Nations Charter.

Yesterday the United States representative set forth a variety of justifications. He took refuge in the atmosphere of conciliation that has prevailed at this special session to allege that Cuba had disregarded that atmosphere by denouncing the duplicitous United States policy of hiding behind a so-called anti-drug crusade - which, as is quite clear, is actually a crusade of cannons.

In the first place, the spirit of international détente in which mankind is placing its hopes, the spirit of co-operation that is so welcome to all our countries, yearning for an end to the risks of nuclear war, and the present spirit of negotiation for the peaceful solution of various regional conflicts: all these true efforts to achieve conciliation have been disregarded and trampled upon by this arrogant empire which has committed one aggressive act after another against our people - at times openly and at other times surreptitiously.

The United States Government, on the one hand, speaks of peace and, on the other, invades, bombards, tramples upon and kills Panamanians. On the one hand, the United States Administration now delights in speaking of co-operation; on the other hand, it harasses and, in a cowardly way, machine-guns a defenceless ship with Cuban sailors on it. We must ask: what kind of conciliation is the United States representative talking about: the conciliation of the whip and the slave?

Under the cover of the so-called struggle against drug trafficking, the United States arrogates to itself the right to intervene in another country and violate

(Mr. Mora Godoy, Cuba)

its national sovereignty. The Panamanian people will never forgive the United States for the 2,000 deaths that resulted from its barbaric action. No one can justify the violation of the principles of international law and of the Charter under the pretext that this is part of the struggle against drugs, for human rights or for democracy. If that were to be allowed, the foundations of peace and the walls of this international forum would crumble.

If the United States is really interested in establishing co-operation in the struggle against drugs, it cannot do that by shooting at a group of Cuban sailors, in an attempt to intimidate them. My Government has repeatedly proposed to the United States Government that it co-operate in the struggle against drugs with the proverbial seriousness which characterized the Cuban revolution and of which the United States Government is well aware. The aim of the United States was to provoke us by carrying out a so-called search of the Hermann on suspicion that it was transporting drugs. It was told that it could contact the Mexican authorities and verify if that were true or not. It would not agree to that procedure and chose force, provocation and harassment.

The heroic attitude of the Cuban sailors, who, faced by machine-guns and high-calibre weapons, voluntarily decided not to yield to intimidation and allow an arbitrary search, was a clear message to the Northern neighbour that this is the kind of response to aggression it will always get from the Cuban people. We shall never cease denouncing all acts of aggression against our people; we shall never cease raising our voices in denunciation of the aggressive policy, the small-minded interests and the claims to hegemony of the United States Government. We can assure them that we shall never allow these things to happen. Cuba will always be the same. We shall never yield to blackmail and pressure.

The meeting rose at 7.55 p.m.